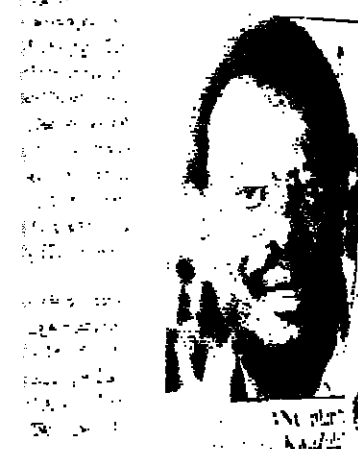


Mr. Lyell, 66, is a former Conservative MP and a member of the House of Lords. He is a former chairman of the Conservative Party and a member of the House of Commons. He is a former chairman of the Conservative Party and a member of the House of Commons. He is a former chairman of the Conservative Party and a member of the House of Commons.

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Sir Nicholas Lyell

He is a former chairman of the Conservative Party and a member of the House of Commons. He is a former chairman of the Conservative Party and a member of the House of Commons. He is a former chairman of the Conservative Party and a member of the House of Commons.

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TEN TO FOLLOW

Richard Evans's tips for the Flat season

Form guide, preview, page 45



SEX EDUCATION

How much should we tell the children?

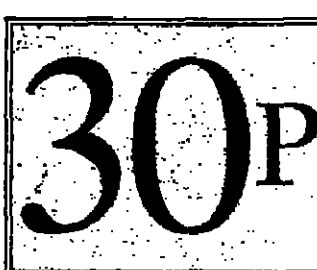
News, page 2; Janet Daley, page 18



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Details, coupon, page 16



THE TIMES



No. 64,910

THURSDAY MARCH 24 1994

Widow wins fight over killer driver

Justice must be improved says Lyell

By FRANCES GIBB AND SIMON DE BRUXELLES

THE Attorney-General last night demanded improvements in the standards of criminal prosecutions to ensure that justice was "less of a game and more a search after truth". Sir Nicholas Lyell also called for more consistency in deciding what charges to press so that fewer cases were abandoned halfway through.

He was speaking within hours of a widow's complaint that the drunken driver who killed her husband had been brought to justice only because she forced the hand of the Crown Prosecution Service.

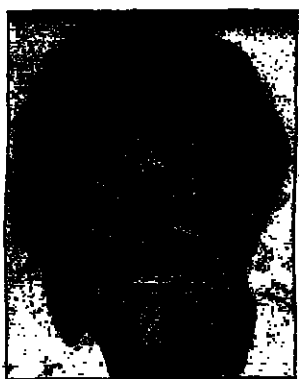
Alison Burgess said that the driver was charged with causing death by dangerous driving only after she had spent £15,000 launching a private prosecution for manslaughter. Her solicitor said the CPS, which took over the case and then did not proceed with the manslaughter charge, treated her "like trash".

In his Downing lecture last night, Sir Nicholas attacked the waste of time and effort in the high proportion of cases — up to 13 per cent — which are dropped by the CPS. He called for closer co-operation between police and the service to ensure the right cases were brought to court and that police laid the right charge at the outset. "Clearly it is wasteful of the time and effort of all concerned to have such a high proportion of cases instituted only to be discontinued."

Sir Nicholas also said there needed to be more emphasis on the public interest when crown prosecutors decided whether to proceed with a



Ryan: caused death by dangerous driving



Martin Burgess: his killer had drunk up to five pints

case. A new code would bring out the "public interest factors in favour of a prosecution more clearly", he said.

Hours earlier, Mrs Burgess had attacked the CPS for its handling of the case of Dean Ryan, who killed her husband when he jumped a red light in Enfield, north London, in

January. Ryan, 26, of Edmonton, was originally accused of causing death by careless driving — a charge which she shocked Mrs Burgess that she began private proceedings for manslaughter.

The CPS then took over the case and decided not to continue with the manslaughter charge, but it upgraded the original charge to causing death by dangerous driving. Ryan was convicted yesterday and remanded for sentencing next month.

After the case, the jury was told that Ryan had drunk more than double the legal limit of alcohol at the time of the accident. He was also disqualified from driving and uninsured when he crashed into Martin Burgess's car. Mr Burgess, 34, a British Gas engineer from Borehamwood, died a few hours later.

Mrs Burgess yesterday said she was delighted with the verdict, but criticised the CPS for "not pressing a more serious charge in the first place. I had to go against the CPS as well as the defendant," she said. "We should have been on the same side."

Her solicitor, Martin Smith, accused the CPS of treating Mrs Burgess "like trash", adding: "They have treated us as the enemy all the way through. I think it's disgraceful and it's made me ashamed to be a lawyer. Mrs Burgess has had to spend £15,000, money which should be going to provide for her children's security, on her search for justice."

The CPS said last night that it had decided to review the



Widow Alison Burgess: "I had to go against the CPS as well as the defendant"

case after Mrs Burgess launched her private prosecution for manslaughter and had concluded that the original death by careless driving charge was inappropriate.

In his speech to the Bar Association for Commerce, Finance and Industry last night, the Attorney-General paid tribute to the work both of the

CPS and Serious Fraud Office, but said: "We should try to achieve a system which is rather less of a game and more of a search after truth."

Lines of communication between prosecutors to investigating officers needed to be shorter, Sir Nicholas added, so that officers understood what was required of them.

The absence of accepted standards to guide the police as to what the most appropriate charge where there were several options was "a fertile source of misunderstanding".

The maximum penalty for causing death by dangerous driving was recently increased to ten years. A careless driving charge usually leads to a fine.

VE-Day parade not to include veterans of Hitler's forces

By MICHAEL HORSNELL AND NICHOLAS WOOD

VETERANS of Hitler's armies will not be allowed to take part in next year's commemoration of VE-Day. Downing Street said last night, amid controversy among Conservative MPs and ex-servicemen's associations about John Major's plans for a parade in central London.

As Tories recoiled at the prospect of former Wehrmacht soldiers marching down The Mall and speculated about the possible inclusion of members of former SS units, Mr Major's officials sought to quell the storm. A senior Downing Street aide said there were "absolutely no plans for veterans of the old Axis powers to take part in the parade".

British ex-servicemen are divided over the Prime Minister's plan to bury the hatchet with Germany as it emerged that serving members of the German armed forces could march past the Cenotaph in a joint VE-Day celebration on May 7 next year.

The Royal British Legion welcomed the reconciliation, although members were angered by the Prime Minister's failure to consult them. But the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women condemned the plan as "insensitive, insulting and inappropriate" and threatened a boycott. Harry Shephard, the association's national vice-chairman, said: "This is Mr Major's next banana skin. I know everyone needs to be more pally in Europe, but it was not suggested that the PLO should march through Tel Aviv after Rabin and Arafat had shaken hands."

Sources at the Defence Ministry disclosed that it had not been warned of the invitation to serving German soldiers to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the end of war in Europe and said the initiative came

from No 10. An official at the ministry's Second World War commemoration unit planning this year's D-Day celebrations said: "This was something the Prime Minister decided to do and No 10 is taking the lead. We are developing concepts."

At the Prime Minister's office it became clear that no plans had been discussed before Mr Major's announcement in a Commons written reply on Tuesday beyond a religious service, a parade in central London and a lunch for visiting international leaders, all attended by the Queen. But it is understood that a service on May 7 for up to 3,000 at St Paul's Cathedral would include a large proportion of Germans after a joint parade in Whitehall.

Among other plans could be similar events in cities such as Coventry and Portsmouth, which were heavily bombed by the Luftwaffe, and even British representation at parades in Berlin and other German cities.

Colonel Philip Cressy, secretary-general of the Royal British Legion, said: "There are certain problems we have to expect. Some people won't be able to accept it all, like war widows and servicemen who were injured. But after 50 years we have to accept that this country is part of Europe. This is the perfect time to express reconciliation."

Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, told journalists in Bonn that he welcomed Mr Major's invitation to Germany to participate in the VE-Day anniversary. The Association of German War Veterans said: "This is a positive development. One cannot object to any event which marks the end of the war."

D-Day compromise, page 15
Leading article, page 19

Major plans new Europe onslaught

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

JOHN Major is to step up the battle over Europe with a promise to defend British interests against the centralising ambitions of Labour and the Liberal Democrats.

The Prime Minister, unrepentant over accusations that he is playing the patriotic card in the row over European Union voting rights, is planning to maintain a hard line in his most important speech of the year to party workers on Saturday. He will address the Conservative Central Council in Plymouth only hours before European Foreign Ministers meet to try again to resolve the row threatening a full-blown crisis in the Union.

Although several Tory MPs

believe that Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, is increasingly isolated in the Cabinet, government officials were at pains yesterday to deny any rift after Mr Major's outspoken attack on "doctrinaire" EU members. Mr Major and Mr Hurd met for 30 minutes to discuss Tuesday's Brussels talks which left a gulf between Britain and most other EU countries. The Cabinet will have more talks today.

Senior Conservative MPs of the centre-left are privately critical of what they see as the failure of Michael Heseltine and Kenneth Clarke to back Mr Hurd as they have done before. "They are playing to a different audience these days," one said. "Both need the right if they are to win the crown."

Euro-enthusiast Tory MPs are privately critical of Mr Major's line, but most stuck to their decision not to rock the boat while Mr Hurd continues to negotiate. However, Edwina Currie, MP for Derbyshire South, said that "picking a fight and being aggressive and rude about other countries is not the way to do it."

Senior ministers remain pessimistic about the chances of a deal at the Foreign Ministers' informal meeting in Greece on Saturday. Mr Hurd has let it be known that he is determined to oppose attempts by some countries, notably Italy, to use the dispute to reopen the whole debate about the EU's future constitution. He has told friends he believes a deal will eventually be done.

Politics, and Richard Wilson, page 9
Rush to expand, page 15
Leading article, page 19

Somerset pigeon homes in on Peking

By KATE ALDERSON

A RACING pigeon which failed to find its way 556 miles home to Somerset from the south of France has turned up two years later in Peking, after a journey covering two continents.

William Pope, the pigeon's owner, from Watchet, Somerset, feared he would never see his bird again. He was astonished to receive a letter from a Chinese pigeon fancier reporting the bird safe and in good health despite its odyssey.

The bird, one of 2.5 million registered in Britain, was traced to its owner by its ring number. Li Rur Yong, of Peking, a member of the Chinese Carrier Pigeon Association, wrote to Mr Pope, 56, a factory owner. "I was extremely honoured to receive a male grey pigeon. The same hobby makes us friends. I do my best to take care of the pigeon while I want to return this lovely pigeon. It has brought up several baby pigeons."

It had apparently made the mistake of turning east instead of north on release, and flying more than 5,000 miles. Mr Pope said: "I have never had a bird travel so far in all my 32 years as a pigeon fancier."

David Glover, editor of the British Homing World magazine, said: "My suspicion is that this bird hitched a ride on a slow boat."

Mr Pope has turned down Mr Yong's offer to send the bird back. It would cost £300 in quarantine fees.

Security revamp gives Top Secret a new meaning

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

A COMPREHENSIVE shake-up of Whitehall security to reflect the end of the Cold War and the increasing threat from terrorism and espionage was unveiled by John Major last night.

Government departments and agencies are to be encouraged to buy equipment such as anti-bugging devices and safes from private companies, and positive vetting of individuals applying for sensitive posts is to be streamlined.

The moves, designed to cut the £300 million Whitehall security budget and to concentrate protection on areas where the State is most at risk, come after a lengthy investigation against the background of calls for more open government. But the results were described by Labour as feeble.

Michael Meacher, shadow public services minister, said if it was intended to advance open government "it has completely failed". Publication last night was intended to protect

Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney-General, in his appearance before the Scott enquiry today, he claimed.

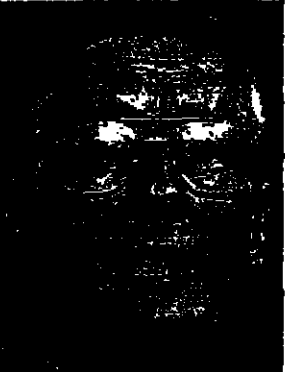
The changes are intended to give individual government departments more responsibility for assessing risks and deciding measures within agreed standards. Security classifications will keep the old labels Top Secret, Secret, Confidential and Restricted, but will be redefined. Under the old system, Top Secret was anything that would cause "exceptionally grave damage to the nation". Secret anything that would cause "serious injury to the nation". Confidential anything that could be "damaging to the interests of the nation", and Restricted as anything that would be "undesirable in the interest of the nation".

These vague definitions will now be replaced with precise criteria in an attempt to reduce the amount of material given the most expensive protection and to make sure that documents are put in the right category.

Mr Major said in a Commons written reply: "While some of the traditional threats to national security may have somewhat reduced, others have not. The security of government is also increasingly threatened by theft, copying and electronic surveillance, as well as by terrorism."

The Prime Minister added that the review had concluded that existing measures should

Continued on page 2, col 7



Meacher: "freedom of information act needed"

Tiny fall in inflation disappoints

Shares fell sharply in London after stronger than expected inflation figures raised fears that a possible cut in interest rates would be delayed. The FT-SE 100 Index fell by 46.2 points to close at 3155.3.

The inflation rate fell to 2.4 per cent in February from 2.5 per cent in January. Disappointed economists had expected a fall to around 2.3 per cent, and a fall in the underlying rate to 2.6 per cent; it remained at 2.8 per cent.

The Halifax, Britain's largest building society, said however that it would cut its mortgage rate if the Bank of England were to knock a further 0.25 per cent off base rates.

Page 25
Anatole Kaletsky, page 29

City banker gets six years

Wallace Duncan Smith, 59, a City merchant banker, was jailed for six years at the Old Bailey for a one-man £100 million fraud. Mr Justice Tuckey said that the collapse of the Wallace Smith Trust had damaged the reputation of the City, and Smith was found guilty after a three-month trial of fraudulent trading and of obtaining property by deception.

Businesswoman is Malvern head

Malvern Girls' College has appointed Dr Anne Lee, aged 40, a businesswoman with no teaching experience, to be its new headmistress from January. Her career has been in management and consultancy.

Go your own way (to page 6.)

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Astor accused him of being preposterous. There were further moos of agreement. Their lordships think that Russell is gaga. But he's not.

BY BEN PRESTON AND PAUL WILKINSON

different. The sort of role playing they are doing is a bit much. Ten is too young."



Parents continued to express disquiet. Susan Murray, whose son is at Highfield, said: "Sex education is one thing, but that's completely different. The sort of role-playing they are doing is a bit much. Ten is too young."



BY JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

"I certainly will not be coming in pretending that I know all there is to know and trying to change everything. There is no need anyway because I am taking on an extremely successful school."

BY PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

Death linked to CSA

A father hanged himself after receiving demands from the Child Support Agency which would have left him with only £12 a week, his family claimed. Jim McKay, 35, of Glasgow, was found dead last Saturday. He had two children and had split up with his girl friend. His death is the latest of several to be linked with the agency.

A father held in prison on charges of murdering his three children in a house fire has been refused permission to attend their funeral today. The governor of Holme House Prison in Stockton-on-Tees turned down a request from Graham Alderton, who is also charged with the attempted murder of the children's mother, Lisa Alexander.

A Conservative police committee chairman was ordered to pay £1,000 to a former police superintendent, John Leach, 53, whom he injured with a punch in the stomach during an over-enthusiastic greeting. John Findon, 66, was also made liable for unspecified costs, expected to be around £10,000, at Warwick County Court.

A former royal employee was charged at Horseferry Road Magistrates Court with stealing a 17th century painting worth £350,000 from Buckingham Palace. Duncan Gray, 22, a former porter, was also accused of taking a rose bowl and five pieces of silver cutlery. Mr Gray, of Hastings, East Sussex, was remanded in custody for a week.

Virtually the entire population of Éperlecques, near Calais, crossed the Channel to Dover yesterday after taking advantage of a special offer in a local paper. The group of nearly 400, including 80 pupils from the village school, were given tea and cakes at an official reception at the White Cliffs Experience museum and then went shopping.

BY PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

The document was drawn up by a senior official for David Hunt, the Employment Secretary, for last Thursday's Cabinet meeting. It urges Mr Hunt

Continued from page 1
be studied to ensure that they were necessary, in relation to today's threats, that commercially available security equipment should be more widely used, and that personnel vetting enquiries should be streamlined, especially in routine cases.

Mr Major said the system would help to identify more precisely those documents which needed protecting, en-


Mr Meacher said it was not translation of security classifications that was needed, but a freedom of information act.

"The real purpose behind this 'latest piece of hype,' he said, "is to protect the Attorney-General from what he tries to defend the comprehensive gagging orders he backed. What he should be doing is apologising for this shroud of secrecy, which would have sent innocent men to prison."

Leading article, page 19

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City banker jailed over £100m failure of firm built on lies

Rich life was a sham

It was all a sham. Smith, who claimed he had income

West Tisted, Hampshire

One of the remarkable features of the trial was the first use in a British court of a satellite television conference link. Witnesses in Australia and Canada gave evidence via a 36in screen. The cost of linking 14 witnesses in this way is believed to have topped £30,000, far cheaper than flying them to Britain.



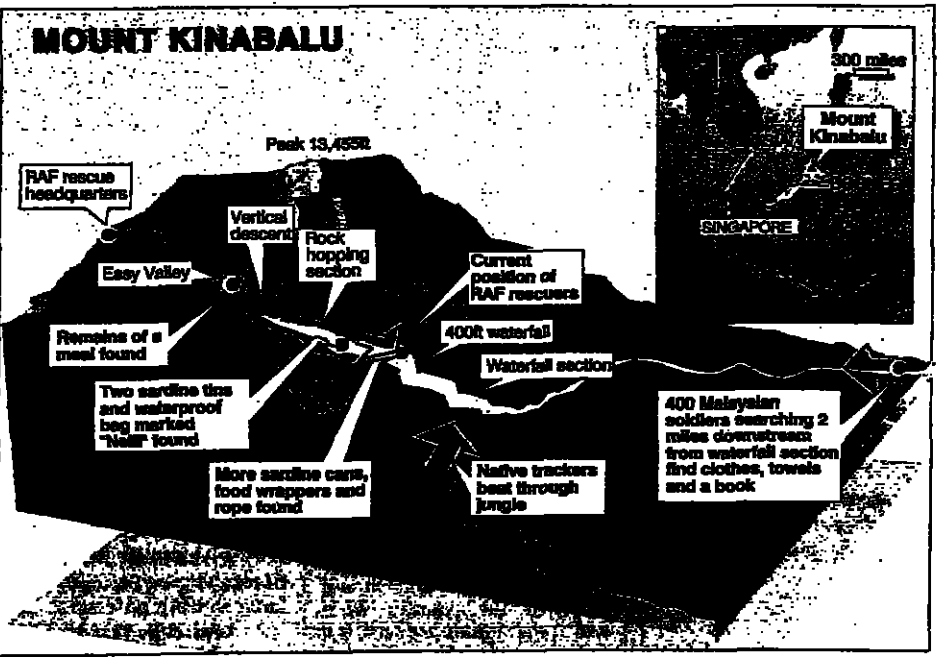
Mrs Hagan, an aromatherapy teacher, is writing her own letter of appeal to Mr Howard today.

The duke had wide interests in the arts, tourism and economic planning in the area, Mr Fieldhouse said.

THE

1990年12月12日

Major Paddy Hartigan, coordinating the search in Hong Kong, said he hoped the lost party had not decided to tackle the waterfall themselves after arriving there and assuming the advance party had already gone over it.



The crisis passed and Mrs Hamand finished *The Resurrection of the Body*. As soon as the judges had made their decision, her 23,000-word work was rushed to a publisher in Upton upon Severn, Hereford and Worcestershire. She and the two runners-up were published within 48 hours.

a particular Patek Philippe movement requires four years of continuous work to bring to absolute perfection, we will take four years. The result will be a watch that is unlike any other. A watch that conveys quality from first glance and first touch. A watch with a distinction: generation after generation it has been worn, loved and collected by those who are very difficult to please; those who will only accept the best. For the day that you take delivery of your Patek Philippe, you will have acquired the best. Your watch will be a masterpiece, quietly reflecting your own values. A watch that was made to be treasured.

Watches of Switzerland

British executive among 75 killed in Aeroflot crash

FROM ANNE MCELVOY IN MOSCOW, HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT, AND ANDREW PIERCE

Aeroflot's service to London has been suspended until investigators find reasons for the latest Russian aviation disaster

RESCUE teams and aviation experts were battling through severe weather and inaccessible terrain yesterday to reach a remote site in the Siberian Taiga where an Aeroflot Airbus crashed, killing all 75 people on board, including at least one Briton.

He has been named as Dominic Scott-Knight, 25, a senior account executive at BBDO, an American advertising agency in Moscow.

The plane was carrying 63 passengers and 12 crew, including three pilots and was under half-full.

An American, an Australian and 17 Chinese passengers also died in the crash. Earlier reports that four Britons had perished could not be confirmed at Sheremetevo

airport in Moscow yesterday. The two-year-old A310 airliner, built by a French-based consortium and sold to Aeroflot 14 months ago, was four hours into a flight from Moscow to Hong Kong when it came down in hilly woodland near the industrial city of Novokuznetsk. There had been no report of technical problems or a mayday call.

Russian air traffic control officers have said that the disappearance of the aircraft from radar screens at about midnight local time, 5pm GMT, happened without warning and claimed that it suggested a defect in the plane rather than pilot error.

Moscow's ministry of trans-

port aviation said yesterday that it could not rule out terrorism. However, this is now thought to be unlikely because so much of the aircraft was discovered in one place.

Emergency teams, including members of the OMON special police force, reached the site of the accident by helicopter and teams of workers, some on skis, searched the barren hillsides. They found the smouldering fuselage of the craft but no survivors.

Staff at BBDO, where Mr Scott-Knight worked, burst into tears when they heard that their colleague had been killed.

Hours before he set off for the airport, he had been buying presents for his father Adrian, a stockbroker from Chelsea, and brother Ben, 24, whom he was going to meet in Hong Kong for a week's holiday.

Mr Scott-Knight's sister Candida, 22, said yesterday: "It always happens to the best. He was a person with a real zest for life. He was a great drinker and this was four hours into the flight so he

would have been well into the gin and tonic."

Ruslan Vasiliev, the deputy marketing director of BBDO, said last night: "Dominic was one of the nicest and brightest members of staff. He was friendly, gifted and clever. He was being groomed for the top."

Maintenance checks on

Aeroflot A310s are carried out by Lufthansa engineers in Frankfurt who have an international reputation for thoroughness. They carried out the last such structural check on the crashed plane a month ago and there was no problem.

Since the break up of Aeroflot, about 230 airlines have

been licensed in the Russian federation. Many of them operate on internal domestic services with old aircraft, few spare parts and little evidence of any proper maintenance procedures.

The Foreign Office has become so worried about the dangers of flying on such airlines that it has put out an

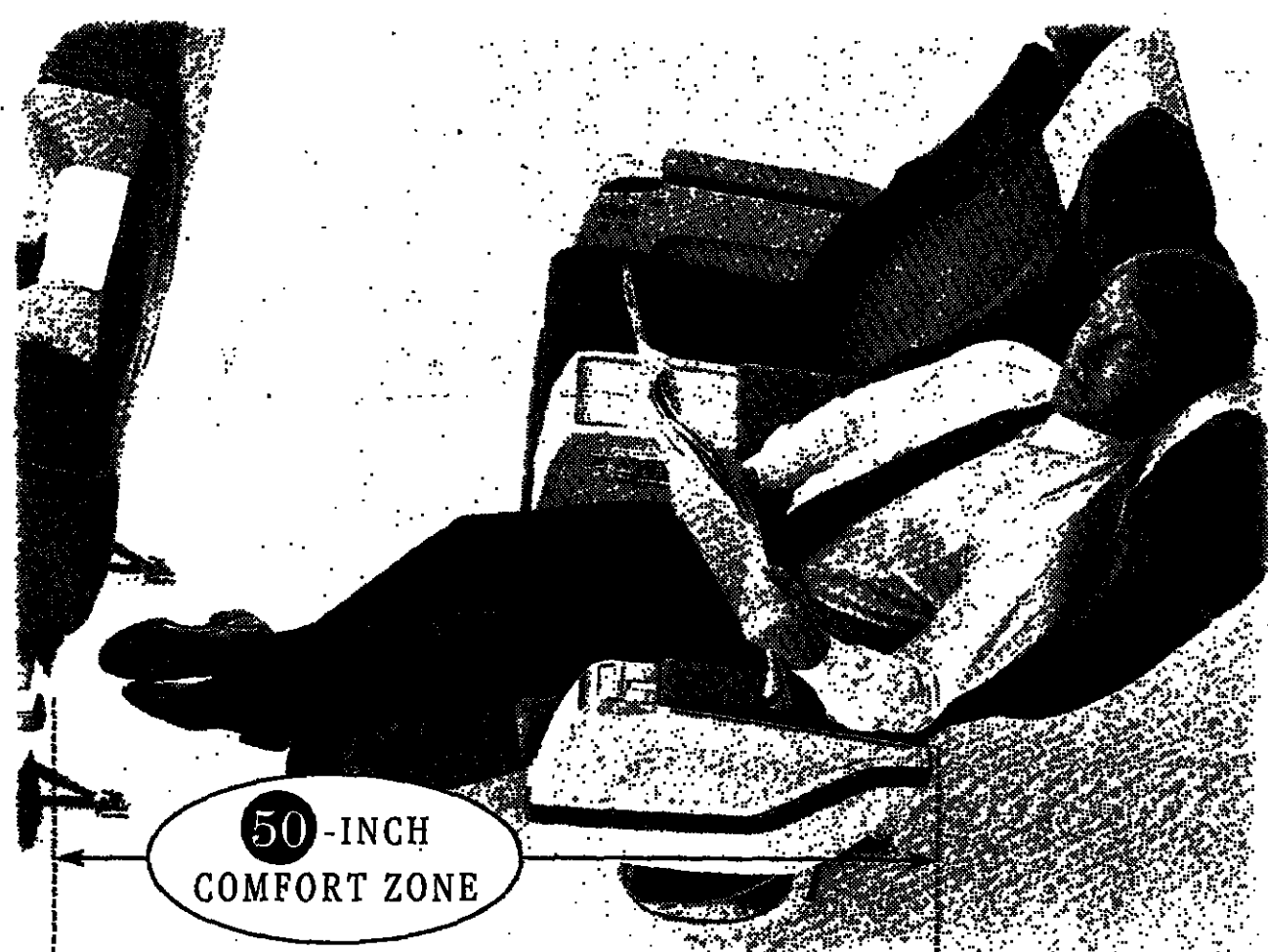
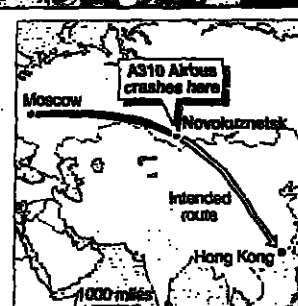
official warning to travel agents and four operators advising air travellers to avoid flying with them. Aeroflot, which bought several Airbus planes last year, said yesterday that its daily flight to London would be suspended pending the results of the investigation into the crash.



A Russian rescue worker sifts through wreckage yesterday near the Siberian town of Novokuznetsk



An Airbus A310 similar to the crashed plane



ANA introduces space travel.

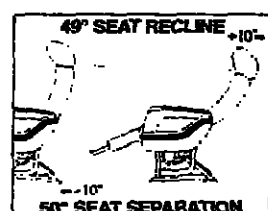
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Rector moved after refusing to work with woman priest

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A CLERGYMAN in the Church of England is to be moved from his parish after refusing to work with a woman priest. It was disclosed yesterday.

The Bishop of Horsham, the Right Rev Lindsay Urwin, has told parishioners at Rogate and Trotton, West Sussex, that he is seeking a new position for the Rev Colin Kassell.

Other disputes are expected as the impact of the ordination of women priests reaches parish level.

Mr Kassell, 51, a former Roman Catholic priest, told his parishioners three weeks ago that he could no longer work with his parish deacon, the Rev Sarah Chapman, because she was seeking ordination as a priest.

Villagers reacted with a 130-signature petition demanding her reinstatement and the removal of the rector. They also held a silent vigil of protest outside St Bartholomew's church, Rogate.

Canon Will Pratt, communications officer for the Chichester diocese, said: "The parishes of Rogate and Trotton were very much in favour of the ordination of women to the priesthood."

Sarah Chapman has lived in the parish for some time and is very well known there. When Colin Kassell went there, no one knew he was opposed to the ordination of women to the priesthood."

Canon Pratt said Mr

Kassell had written a good report recommending her for the priesthood. "He did not wish to stand in her way and spoke very highly of the work she had done. But when his involvement in that process had passed, he told her, Bishop Urwin and the congregation that being personally opposed to the ordination of women to the priesthood, he could not work with her."

"A lot of difficulties arose and there was a great deal of upset in the parish."

Canon Pratt said that because of a breakdown in the pastoral relationship, Bishop Urwin believed it would be right to find an alternative post for Mr Kassell. "Mr Kassell is quite within his rights. Under the measure [to ordain women] he does not have to accept her. It would be quite wrong that he should suffer a penalty for doing that which is perfectly correct under the measure."

Mrs Chapman, 38, ran the parishes for two years during an interregnum between priests but is also to be moved. If her application to become a priest is successful, she will be ordained on May 15 with about 20 others from the Chichester diocese at St Swithin's, East Grinstead, and licensed to the neighbouring parish Easebourne.

Mr Kassell has refused to comment.

William Rees-Mogg, page 18

Fire chief says most Asians fail stature test

BY ANDREW PIERCE

A CHIEF fire officer has provoked an outcry by saying that few Asians are big enough to join the brigade.

Malcolm Eastwood, head of Gloucestershire fire service, made the comment at a county council meeting on the fire service's equal opportunities policy. "Asians are very small in stature," he said. "They are like the Chinese. They are not always measured up to the entry requirements." Firemen must be at least 5ft 6in and have a 2in chest expansion.

He caused more anger when he said he was pleased the service had reached its ethnic minority target this year, taking the number from one to two out of 600. One is Asian and one is black.

Cheltenham Race Advice Service condemned his remarks and the Commission for Racial Equality called for an enquiry.

The Fire Service training college at Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, which takes 40 Asian and Hong Kong trainees each year, said: "Any reasonably fit person should be able to pass the chest capacity specification."

The controversy has revived memories of the 1992 election when the black barrister John Taylor failed to become Tory MP for Cheltenham amid claims of racism in the town.

Mr Eastwood said last night: "What I said was factual, not racial."

Satellite TV row goes to court

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN AND JAMES LANDALE

THE European Commission is to take Britain to court for failing to implement European Union broadcasting legislation properly, EU officials said yesterday.

The dispute is based on the complex issue of who should regulate satellite television companies which have offices in one country but transmit signals from another.

Britain argues that the responsibility for regulation should lie with the country from which the signals are sent, but Brussels says the regulating country should be the one in which the broadcaster's main offices are based.

In a letter to the Government, the Commission will claim that the British 1990 Broadcasting Act violates the EU's "television without frontiers" directive of 1989.

An EU official said yesterday: "According to the UK's interpretation of the rules, if a French broadcaster decided to transmit one of its channels from a satellite uplink in Britain, the British would regulate it. That is absurd."

KEENE on CHESS

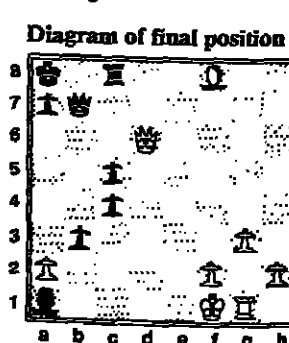
BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Alexander Beliavsky is a highly erratic player, capable of beating anyone on his day, but also vulnerable to prolonged periods of poor form. At Linas he was horribly out of sorts and finished last with 2 points from 13 games. In the following, he is outplayed by the Spanish number one, Miguel Illescas.

White: Alexander Beliavsky
Black: Miguel Illescas
Linas, March 1994

Semi-Slav Defence

1 d4	d5
2 e4	c6
3 Nf3	Nf6
4 Nc3	e6
5 Bg5	dxp4
6 e4	b5
7 e5	h6
8 Bh4	g5
9 Ng5	Ng6
10 Bxg6	Nbd7
11 exf6	Bxf7
12 g3	c5
13 d5	Ne5
14 Bg2	Nd3+
15 Kf1	Qd7
16 dxe6	fxe6
17 b3	0-0-0
18 Bxc4	Bh6
19 Bb4	b4
20 Nd5	exd5



Short plays for charity

Nigel Short is giving a simultaneous chess display at Simpson's-in-the-Strand, central London, on Sunday afternoon in aid of the Sick Children's Trust. For further information, or if you want to play, call Simpson's on 071 836 9112.

Winning Move, page 48

Victim's exaggeration of his wealth tempted debt-ridden insurance broker to kill Murderer of newlyweds is given two life terms

By RICHARD DUCE

AN INSURANCE broker who murdered a newlywed couple and his wife while her pleas for mercy were recorded by a British Telecom operator was yesterday given two life sentences by Hove Crown Court.

Stephen Young, a gun-enthusiast, was convicted of murdering Harry Fuller, 45, a car salesman, and his wife Nicola, 27.

Young, 35, a freemason and father of two, gunned down Mr Fuller at his cottage in Wadhurst, East Sussex, in February last year and then shot Mrs Fuller four times.

Young's third shot, fired at close range, passed through Mrs Fuller's mouth, damaging her tongue and splintering her jaw. Young left her for dead. But Mrs Fuller managed to stagger into her bedroom and tap out 999 on the phone. However, her horrific injuries meant that she could not make herself understood to the operator, and hearing her attempts to call for help,

Young returned and shot her in the back of the head. Her pitiful and fearful squeals as Young returned were recorded on tape.

Mr Justice French made no comment as he passed sentence on Young who shook his head as the gully verdicts were returned. The decision was greeted with loud cheers from the public gallery, where



Young: killed couple to solve money problems

Mr Fuller's relatives had sat throughout the trial.

Police believe that Mr Fuller's exaggeration of his wealth led to his murder. Det Supt Graham Hill, head of Sussex CID, said: "My firm belief is that Harry Fuller was an exaggerator. If he had £3,000 in his pocket he would tell how he had £30,000."

As Mr Fuller's broker, Young knew that the car dealer dealt in cash and often carried thousands of pounds.

Young, who tried to brazen out his involvement in the murders, was trapped by two details he had failed to foresee. A conversation he had on the night before the killings in which he agreed to meet Mr Fuller at the cottage the next morning was recorded by the security-conscious Mr Fuller. The tape was played on the BBC TV programme *Crime-watch* and Young's voice was recognised by his sister-in-law.

Second, Young was un-

aware that a bank's security system had filmed his car entering and leaving Wadhurst, with an hour's interval between.

The police's suspicions about Young's involvement were reinforced when they went to his home in Pembury, Kent, and discovered an arsenal of weapons and ammunition. Young was a member of the 21st Kent Home Guard Rifle Club but did not have a licence for some of the guns.

Police then discovered that Young, an outwardly respectable businessman, had extensive debts. He had borrowed money from a number of sources, including his in-laws and a close friend. He had remortgaged his home, was in arrears with the payments and also had an overdraft, credit card debts, and owed money to insurance companies, one of which was pressing him for payment. The day after the murders



Nicola and Harry Fuller: married six months before they were shot dead

Young was able to pay £6,000 into his bank.

At his trial, Young claimed he discovered the Fullers already dead. He had panicked and fled after hearing some-

one upstairs and later received threatening telephone calls which stopped him telephoning police.

British Telecom, which handles about 22 million emergen-

cy calls a year, admitted yesterday that procedures for dealing with 999 calls were not followed in Mrs Fuller's case, and said operators had been reminded of the rules.

Widow of policeman plagued by hate calls

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE widow of a murdered police officer and their eight-year-old daughter have received obscene and abusive telephone calls.

They started last October and increased last month when Gill Forth received a cheque for £37,000 raised by sympathisers after the killing of her husband Bill last year. Sergeant Forth, 34, was stabbed and battered to death by two drink and drug-crazed young men as he answered a call to a domestic disturbance in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear. Last month the two, Philip English, now aged 16, and David Weddle, 25, were found guilty of his murder.

Mrs Forth, 35, said at her home in Sunderland yesterday: "It is terrible, these people are only adding to our torment. My daughter is only eight. She got a mouthful of filth and remarks of a sexual nature. We are trying to get back to a normal life, but are not being allowed to."

Some callers have attacked a campaign she has led to give beat officers better protection.

Three held after police swoop on arms cache

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

SCOTLAND Yard detectives have found 28 weapons including a sub-machine gun and assault rifles after raiding two addresses in east London.

Three men have been charged in connection with the finds and tests are under way to discover whether the weapons have been fired or used in armed crimes.

Police believe armoureders in the underworld are now hiring out weapons for a range of crimes. Guns are being used not only by armed robbers but also in the drug world and for an increasing number of murders by professional hitmen.

The raids are part of a drive by Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, to track down the sources of weapons reaching professional criminals. Since last summer, criminal intelligence experts have been working in the shadowy world of gun sales and supplies and new initiatives are expected to be announced next month.

A total of 125 weapons were seized by Flying Squad officers in 1992-93. Police say supplies of arms are being smuggled in from abroad and almost all the weapons found in the latest raids were either European or American in origin.

There is concern not only at the increasing scale of supply but also that some criminals may be prepared to attack the police. Mr Condon has already said that the possibility of arming the police will be driven by events such as attacks on officers. Chief constables from across Britain are to discuss general policy on arming officers next month.

Single pill cures traveller's tummy

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

A SINGLE dose of a common antibiotic could halve the time tourists take to recover from a holiday upset stomach, tests on British troops have shown.

Experiments on British soldiers in Belize have shown that the antibiotic, ciprofloxacin, can dramatically reduce recovery time from an attack of travellers' diarrhoea.

Professor Michael Farthing, of St Bartholomew's Hospital in London, tested the drug on 83 soldiers posted to Belize. Within a day of the onset of diarrhoea, 45 of them were given a single dose of the antibiotic while the other 38 received a dummy tablet.

In those given the drug, the duration of the upset stomach was cut from 50 hours to 22, while the need to visit the lavatory was also halved.

Professor Farthing told this week's spring meeting of the British Society of Gastroenterology that having to take one pill rather than a course lasting several days cut costs and made sure that everybody took the medicine. But he admitted that the risks of resistant strains of bugs emerging — which might increase by taking a single pill — needed investigation.

Baroness Thatcher collapsed while speaking in Santiago on Monday. According to Professor Farthing, her experience was commonplace. "Thirty million people travel from industrialised to developing countries each year, and half suffer an episode of acute diarrhoea," he said.

Body and Mind, page 17



A saleroom manager inspecting the paintings

Museum outbid for rare artworks

By A STAFF REPORTER

AN UNKNOWN buyer outbid the British Museum yesterday for two medieval paintings thought to be the only artworks to have survived the 1834 fire at the Palace of Westminster. The paintings were sold for £120,000 after the museum dropped out of the bidding at £115,000.

Ronald Lee, a specialist in medieval paintings who acted for the museum, said afterwards that he bid more than he was authorised. "I went well beyond what the British Museum wanted to pay, and I was then spending private money," Alastair Dickinson, who

bid for the buyer, said he believed that the paintings would remain in Britain. "Despite the fact that they will obviously need some sort of restoration, they are exceptionally rare things because of their date and their provenance."

The wood panel paintings of an angel and a prophet were found in an attic in Bristol and were offered for sale at the city's auction rooms. The buyer will have to pay about £135,000 in total, including a premium and VAT.

Art prize, page 7
Arts, pages 37-39

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EMERGENCY

NSPCC presses for good parent guide to halt child abuse

By Robi Dutta

A CHILDREN'S charity demanded a "major cultural shift" yesterday to reduce the level of child abuse after 20 years of failed legislation and reform of protection policies.

Abuse and neglect was still rising, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children said, with babies under one year old the most likely victims of mistreatment. The charity said there was a need for public education programmes promoting good parenting which were neither punitive nor patronising.

Launching an independent national commission into preventing child abuse, the NSPCC estimated that 180 children would die from abuse or neglect this year. Jim Harding, the charity's director of children's services, said: "The child protection system is concerned about abuse that has already happened. The trigger is too late."

Of an estimated 186,000 investigations which took place last year, only one in seven resulted in the child's name being placed on the

child protection register. The charity said there was also evidence to suggest that some children and their families were being drawn into protection procedures unnecessarily because child protection initiatives currently focused on investigation. This was often unproductive and traumatic when follow-up support services were not available.

The charity called for a "major cultural shift", widening the responsibility for child abuse to include public education and child and family support programmes as well as the investigative work presently carried out by social workers and local authorities. Mr Harding said: "Child abuse is the responsibility of us all, not just a few professional agencies."

The 18-month enquiry, which is described as a "friendly forum" for discussion, will highlight the causes of abuse and suggest strategies for prevention. The NSPCC said existing child protection measures worked for most children, but that

policies had been developed in response to a few tragic mistakes, rather than through successful work.

The charity said the commission was needed to broaden the debate to include other issues such as children's rights, housing, education and health. The NSPCC's 1993 annual report, which was also published yesterday, showed an increase in requests for help and advice.

Eileen Hayes, an NSPCC child abuse adviser, said the commission would suggest improvements in the use of existing resources, perhaps by expanding ante-natal classes to include post-natal discussions on parenting. The national curriculum should also include some good parenting preparation.

The charity intends to highlight schemes such as its own Child Protection Teams and projects which provide drop-in and family centres. But Ms Hayes said: "The NSPCC is just a small part in the whole review. Society as a whole must act."



The Princess arriving at Zurich airport yesterday

Detectives keep the royal peace

By A Staff Reporter

THE Princess of Wales flew to Zurich yesterday before crossing into Austria for a skiing holiday with her two sons. Although the Princess has been dispensing with protection officers since her withdrawal from royal duties, the family was accompanied by three detectives.

Their main job is expected to be to protect her from the media. Inspector Trevor Birtles is detailed to protect the princess. It is thought that a fourth officer is already in Lech.

This is the fourth consecutive year the Princess has chosen to stay in Lech. Last year, her trip was marred by an angry confrontation with a horde of photographers who blocked the street as the Princess and her sons went shopping.

Prince William, 11, and Prince Harry, 9, who are on Easter break from Ludgrove, their boarding school in Berkshire, will have the chance to show their mother their skiing skills. They spent three days skiing with their father in Klosters, Switzerland, last month.

Letters, page 19

Diary of a traitor to be released

By Alan Hamilton

ONE of the enduring debates of the 20th century will be rekindled next week when the Public Record Office releases Roger Casement's diaries.

Historians have argued for years over the authenticity of parts of the diaries, which appear to show that one of the great heroes of Irish nationalism, hanged at Pentonville as a traitor in 1916, was a promiscuous homosexual.

Copies of the five "black diaries" containing descriptions of sexual encounters with men were leaked in Britain and America soon after the Easter Rising in Dublin. Supporters of Casement and the Irish cause have since argued that the relevant entries were added by British agents to discredit a plea for clemency.

Irish opinion has consistently rejected Casement's alleged homosexuality, but last year David Bakewell, a forensic scientist, after studying Casement papers in the Public Record Office and the National Library in Dublin, declared that the diaries were written entirely in the hand of the man regarded as a treacherous gun-runner by the British, who had earlier knighted him for his public service.

Casement, who was born in Dun Laoghaire, outside Dublin, was forced by ill-health to

retire back to Ireland in 1912, where he became deeply involved in the emerging Irish struggle for independence.

At the height of the First World War he travelled secretly to Germany to raise support for the Irish cause. On his return by German submarine, which landed him on a beach in Co Kerry as the Fenians were attacking the General Post Office in Dublin, he was arrested by the British, tried and sentenced to death for treason. He was also stripped of his knighthood.

When the diaries were leaked, support for him evaporated in Britain and America, and he was hanged on August 3, 1916.



Casement hanged at Pentonville in 1916

Thames 'at risk' from atom pipe

By Nick Nuttall
Environment Correspondent

DRINKING water supplies in Berkshire may be contaminated by radioactive leaks from the Aldermaston atomic energy research establishment, an enquiry was told yesterday.

Studies by George Reeves, a geologist at Newcastle University, indicate that radioactive spills and leaks from the site could have penetrated to both shallow and deep groundwater supplies.

Leaks from a buried discharge pipe, which runs for 12 miles from Aldermaston to east of Pangbourne, where it feeds into the Thames, could also have polluted water-bearing rocks and soil.

Dr Reeves has concluded that the likelihood of drinking water contamination is "high" from both the establishment and the 40-year-old pipe. His findings, commissioned by the environmental pressure group Greenpeace, were presented at the opening of a two-day enquiry ordered by Reading Borough Council.

John Sexton, Thames Water's environment director, said in a statement that "there is no evidence of any contamination of our drinking water supplies".

Art prize goes back to basics

By Alison Roberts
Arts Reporter

THE backers of a new £30,000 art prize have criticised the "enemies of painting" and the trend towards avant-garde art, typified by Rachel Whiteread's award-winning concrete house.

The Jerwood Prize for Painting has been initiated by *Modern Painters*, the fine art magazine. An editorial in its spring issue accuses the arts establishment of promoting "thin, trivial and cheaply political art".

The magazine wants a return to the disciplines of painting, which it says requires much more talent than video or installation art. It echoes the thoughts of Paul Johnson, who labelled conceptual art-lovers as "bricks", a reference to Carl André's 1976 pavement of bricks in the Tate Gallery.

The Jerwood is seen as a foil to the Tate's £20,000 Turner Prize, won last year by Whiteread for her controversial "sculpture".

Karen Wright, the magazine's editor, said: "The problem lies with important curators who are not particularly interested in painting — there is a feeling that it isn't interesting if it isn't new."

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0800 19

Embattled Attorney-General to take on Matrix Churchill critics

By MICHAEL DYNES
AND FRANCIS GIBB



Sir Nicholas confident he has acted correctly

SIR Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney-General, faces the stiffest test of his political career today when he appears before the Scott enquiry to explain his conduct in the Matrix Churchill arms-to-Iraq trial.

Sir Nicholas will be asked to justify his attempt to use the Government's sweeping powers of concealment to suppress 300 pages of confidential Whitehall documents proving that the three defendants were innocent of the charges laid against them.

Despite widespread criticisms over the use of public interest immunity certificates in a criminal trial, Sir Nicholas has remained

■ Many believe Sir Nicholas Lyell will have to use all his legal skills today to avoid becoming the scapegoat for the arms-to-Iraq affair

adamant that the advice he gave four ministers that they had a "legal duty" to sign the gagging orders was correct.

But his position has been seriously undermined in a series of disclosures by Michael Heseltine, the President of the Board of Trade, and Alan Moses QC, who prosecuted the case on behalf of Customs and Excise, which have cast doubt on the legitimacy of the Government's claims.

The enquiry has already heard

evidence that the law on public interest immunity is confused, that advice given by government law officers has been inconsistent, and that the Government has sought to suppress or disclose confidential Whitehall documents whenever it suited it.

Sir Nicholas is expected to attempt to pin the blame for the trial on Alan Clark, the former trade and defence minister, who initially told Customs investigators that at no time did he ever encourage the

company to make false declarations when apply for export licences.

Sir Nicholas will also have to explain why he failed to honour the written assurance Mr Heseltine said he was given before the trial began. Mr Heseltine initially refused to sign the gagging order for fear it would look like he was taking part in a government cover-up. He only signed the certificate after Sir Nicholas promised to notify the trial judge of his belief that the documents should be handed over to the defence.

During his evidence to the enquiry last week, however, Mr Moses told Lord Justice Scott that when he met Sir Nicholas to discuss the case three days before the trial began,

the Attorney-General made no mention of Mr Heseltine's views.

Sir Nicholas is now regarded by many as the most likely scapegoat for the Government in the affair. Yet he himself remains quietly confident in the integrity of his actions and, according to those close to him, is "looking forward to having the chance finally to answer all the points that have been building up".

"He is rather academic as an advocate," one QC said. "But he is a proper lawyer, not like some politicians who have just dabbled in it. He was in one of the top sets of commercial chambers, Brick Court, and is a first class commercial lawyer."

Sir Nicholas has prided himself

on being one of the few lawyers to understand the use of public interest immunity certificates and will deliver a robust defence.

A quiet, courteous and charming man, his style is deliberate and low-key. Popular both at the Bar and in government circles, he is widely regarded as "so straight you could draw a line with him".

But in the short time since taking over as chief government law officer in 1992 he has had a bumpy ride: first in the Asil Nadir affair, when he had to admit to MPs that they were misled over advice he was given by the Serious Fraud Office; then over his advice to the Government over Maastricht.

Gilbert Gray, page 18

Watchdog examines root filling work

Dentists accused of quick-fix treatment

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

POOR quality, "quick-fix" NHS dental work has prompted an official enquiry into standards of treatment.

The Dental Practice Board, the government agency that monitors the quality of dental work, will examine the standard of root fillings, which are performed before a crown or bridge is fitted. The board, which authorises payments and has the power to investigate individual dentists, will ask a random sample to provide X-rays to judge the quality of their fillings.

More than a million root fillings are performed each year at a cost to the NHS of £45 million. An article in *Dental Profile*, the official journal of the Dental Practice Board, says: "Regrettably, much of the treatment performed is of poor quality because quick-fix techniques are employed rather than the

application of sound scientific principles."

Dr David Edmunds and Paul Dummer, who are the authors of the standard guidelines for root treatment, write that without a sound filling "the best executed crown and bridge work will have only limited potential for survival".

Dr Edmunds, a consultant at Cardiff dental school and former president of the British Endodontic (root treatment) Society, is to conduct the enquiry. He said that anecdotal evidence showed that NHS dentists were not reaching the standard of work now accepted as necessary across Europe.

He said that to fill root canals, dentists were using cements, which were cheap and quick, instead of the longer lasting rubber material gutta-percha. They were also not taking sufficient time and

care to excavate the canal, which has to be shaped in a precise way.

"Using quick fix cements means dentists can get away with less meticulous shaping procedures, but the cements tend to be more soluble and are lost from the canal so the quality of the filling declines. The likelihood is that the filling will fail sooner and the patient will probably lose the tooth," Dr Edmunds said.

He advised patients having root fillings to ask their dentist for the rubber material instead of cement, although many dentists will only provide gutta-percha privately. The cost to the patient of a root filling on the NHS ranges from £16.44 to £39.52, but rises to £100 to £200 privately.

Dr Edmunds said the treatment provided on the NHS was good enough to justify the NHS fees, but the fees needed to be increased to allow more time for better work.

The British Dental Association said the fees for root fillings matched current practice. "One dentist may use a painstaking technique that takes an hour and another may say they can do it in 10 minutes, so they agree an average."

Body and Mind, page 17

COST OF DENTAL WORK

	NHS patient pays	NHS dentist earns	Private
Root filling, upper incisor (one canal)	£16.44	£20.55	£100-plus
Root filling in molar (back tooth) 3 or 4	£39.52	£49.40	£200-plus
Crown (back tooth)	£30.08	£75.10	£150-£225
Filling in molar (back tooth)	£10.68	£13.35	£25-£40

Note: NHS prices are due to rise by 3 per cent from April 1



The pine marten could be a victim of intensive farming and vanishing habitat

Last pine marten lost to England

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

ONE of Britain's rarest wild mammals, the cat-like pine marten, has become extinct in England, scientists believe.

The tree-loving creature's demise has shocked conservationists at English Nature, the Government's chief wildlife agency, who had expected to find small numbers surviving in wooded parts of Cumbria and Northumberland.

Pine martens, the prettiest of the weasel family and close cousins of badgers, otters and polecats, used to be found throughout Britain. They were hunted for their fur, which was so highly prized in the Middle Ages that only royalty was allowed to wear it.

"We were surprised to find no evidence at all of pine martens in the North of England," Tony Mitchell-Jones, chief mammal ecologist at English Nature, said. "We had hoped to reintroduce some of them to parts of southern England where they formerly occurred."

Paul Bright, a zoologist at Bristol University, conducted a three-month search last year of woodland areas in the Lake District and Northumberland where pine martens were still found in a survey in 1987-88. He found no sign of their presence and thinks they are probably now gone from England.

"We are going to conduct further searches in the Kielder Forest just to make sure," he said. "The disappearance of pine martens in

England is worrying because they are increasing in Scotland, though they probably number fewer than 3,000 even there, and other endangered mammals such as otters and polecats are recovering slowly."

Pine martens, also called tree weasels, spend most of the day in their lairs, usually hollow trees, rock fissures or disused birds' nests. They hunt at night and chase squirrels through trees, making leaps of up to 12ft. They also prey on voles, rabbits, rats, small birds, insects, slugs and frogs and sometimes raid farms in pursuit of poultry and game birds.

Dr Bright said: "They are very attractive bushy tailed animals with brown glossy fur and a creamy yellow patch at the throat, but you seldom see them. The main sign that they are around is their droppings which have a distinctive twisted shape and an unmistakably sweet, musky odour — a bit like the smell of cranberry jelly."

The pine marten survived in most parts of England, though not in huge numbers, until 1850. Trapping by Victorian and Edwardian gamekeepers took a heavy toll.

The decline of gamekeeping after the First World War helped the creatures to recover in Scotland, but in England they may have been hampered by more intensive farming and lack of woodland habitat.

Fresh eggs left with BT on their faces

BRITISH Telecom is to become the first company in the country to advertise on eggs. From next week, 13.5 million eggs sold in supermarkets will display the BT piper logo with the message "Wake up to BT's new daytime rate".

BT said: "The strong association between eggs and the morning was too good an opportunity to miss."

Ink-jet printers, which do not touch the

shell, will apply the adverts using food colouring. They are already used for "best before" dates.

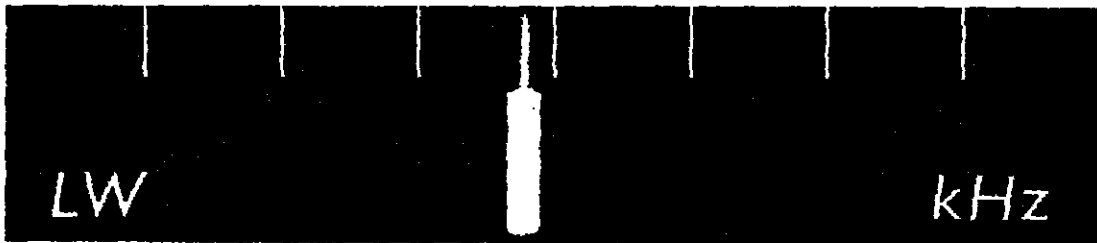
Last September, the EC announced a ban on "eggverts", but Brussels has since relented and allowed a trial run to see if consumers welcome them. Eggvert Ltd has been formed to carry out the experiment in the UK. A spokesman said many other companies were interested in

following BT, which has paid £40,000 for its "eggvertising".

A BT spokesman said: "Research shows that up to ten people see every egg sold, whether it is in the supermarket, refrigerator or kitchen. This campaign is ideal for us to remind people of our new daytime phone call rate." Tesco and Asda supermarkets will stock the printed eggs from next Monday.

This year every ball will be bowled on the same spot

198



This summer, the best-loved team in cricket, BBC's Test Match Special squad will be broadcasting exclusively on Radio 4 198LW. They'll bring you ball-by-ball coverage of all the Tests and one day Internationals against New Zealand and South Africa, as well as the Benson & Hedges and NatWest Semi-Finals and Finals. And, to warm you up for the season, tune in to the last three Tests in the West Indies, starting on March 25th. You can catch every ball without moving a muscle.

Test Match Special



Muslims' plea refused

Blackburn housing committee has turned down a request from Muslims to have their east-facing lavatories, regarded as an insult to Allah, realigned at public expense.

More than 25 tenants on the Wimberley estate petitioned the council to have their toilets moved to a north-south axis. Andy Kay, the committee chairman, said yesterday any application to reposition would be sympathetically considered but if it was agreed, the work would have to be paid for by the tenants.

Files ruling

The High Court dismissed the claim of a Chesterfield man that Derbyshire County Council had no right to deny him access to files that he feared might falsely allege he raped his daughter. The council said that to give the father access could cause the 15-year-old irreparable harm.

Aid ruined

A van that was stolen in Cheltenham when packed with relief supplies for Bosnia has been recovered, minus most of the aid raised by a sponsored toddler. What the thieves left, they damaged.

Driver held

A man was arrested after a mechanical digger was repeatedly driven into the extension of a house in Slough causing damage estimated at £26,000.

Girl seized

A ten-year-old girl was forced into a car as she walked to school in Tumbidge Wells, Kent. She struggled free.

Computer choices squander millions

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

BADLY designed computer systems have cost Britain hundreds of millions of pounds, the chief executive of the British Computer Society said yesterday.

Gavin Kirkpatrick told a conference in Edinburgh that there was an almost total failure to design systems to required standards of performance. "Wealth — yours and mine — has been flushed down the drain" as a result, he said.

Mr Kirkpatrick cited the London Stock Exchange's Taurus system as the costliest failure — "£250 million and rising". Other errors had been made by the Property Services Agency, which had lost up to £65 million; the employment department (whose field system was poor value for £48 million); and the Performing Rights Society, which has lost up to £10 million.

The failures were caused by a severe lack of professionalism, he said. To prevent further mistakes, he suggested that the Government should insist that project managers were properly qualified and kept up to date.

Top management needed to be better informed about the pitfalls, and lessons learnt from mistakes should be widely disseminated.

□ A video recorder that guides its user step by step through questions and answers could result from research into voice recognition by computer being carried out by the Economic and Social Research Council.

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The new rate will be shown on statements issued on or after 4th April 1994. Interest will be charged at the new rate on any balance (from statements dated 1st March 1994 and after) which remains outstanding on or after 4th April 1994. The interest rate payable on certain credit balances under Condition 3.3 in the Conditions of Use remains at 2.00% gross p.a.

All interest rates quoted are variable. Full terms and conditions are available from any Halifax branch. New cardholders will receive notification of these changes with their new cards.



Halifax Building Society, Trinity Road, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX1 2RG.

Leadership rivalry fuels fears of Tory civil war

By Nicholas Wood and Philip Webster

THE biggest political beauty contest of John Major's troubled Government takes the stage in Plymouth this weekend.

By a quirk of fate Michael Heseltine, Kenneth Clarke and Mr Major all address the party faithful at the Conservative Central Council meeting on Saturday. Douglas Hurd, the one Cabinet heavyweight unencumbered by political ambition, speaks the day before — giving him top billing in his uncomfortable role as the chief Brussels-baiter but also symbolising his estrangement from his colleagues.

Mr Heseltine will talk about "Helping British business win". Mr Clarke about "Policies for growth" and Mr Major about the district and European elections.

A small, uncomfortable thought will prey on the minds of the 800-strong audience of party workers: Is Mr Major still the man to lead the party and, if he should be swept aside, does Heseltine or Mr Clarke offer the promise of a better tomorrow?

With the ground shifting beneath Mr Major's feet as he embraces the right-wing "bastards" he exorcised so recently, the judges in the hall will not be the only ones marking their cards for Mr Plymouth 1994 — a contest that could prove a dress rehearsal for a Mr UK later in the year.

Until now Mr Major's precarious hold on the crown has been bolstered by Mr Heseltine, Mr Clarke and Mr Hurd. They have kept the Euro-sceptics at bay and aimed foreign policy at the heart of Europe. But political ambition and the dispute over voting rights in Brussels are undermining this triumvirate as Mr Hurd wrestles with his pro-European conscience and Mr Clarke and Mr Heseltine play to the right-wing Euro-sceptic gallery.

The Foreign Secretary's natural inclination to seek a compromise is held in check by a tight mandate. "The Cabinet that met last Thursday has changed dramatically from the one that boldly sent Mr Major into battle against the Tory Euro-sceptics in 1992. The reason, MPs agree, is the leadership speculation."

Mr Heseltine, Mr Clarke and Mr Hurd were the key figures in the gamble that saw Mr Major put his future on the line in the Maastricht



paving vote in 1992. When last July Mr Major was defeated on the social chapter, Mr Clarke and Mr Hurd proposed that he should face down the sceptics with a confidence motion. He won.

Last Thursday the high-rollers were silent. Mr Hurd was given a bottom line that was not flexible enough to consider a deal in Brussels on Tuesday and, unless the Cabinet varies it today, it will not be enough on Saturday.

Whereas in the past Mr Hurd could have expected the pro-European Mr Clarke and Mr Heseltine to back a conciliatory approach, they are now seen to be playing to a different audience. Neither intends challenging Mr Major, but they know that if the leader-

ship becomes vacant they will be seen as the prime contenders. To win they would have to carry the votes of the right.

Last Thursday it was the right, in the form of Michael Portillo, Peter Lilley, John Redwood and Michael Howard, who argued most vehemently against any weakening of Britain's position. But according to informed sources Mr Heseltine and Mr Clarke were also in the "no surrender" camp. Reports that Mr Heseltine had opposed any compromise, as clearly overstated, but he sharply went along with the group's negotiating remit.

Mr Clarke is reported by right-wing sources to have "equivocated" but, in the days since, his line has been tougher than ever.

Mr Hurd's supporters in the junior ranks of the Government did not like Mr Major's change of tone on Tuesday: one suggested he had "signed his death warrant". Although Mr Hurd will not allow it to show, he cannot be happy with the hand he has been dealt, supporters believe. Several MPs were wondering whether he would want to go on in the Government.

The central council will no doubt rally behind Mr Major and disperse to prepare for the elections. Superficially, Labour and the Liberal Democrats are the main rivals. The Tory highlanders, freshly going in fear of renewed civil war over Europe.

Leading article, page 19

European dilemma silences Labour

By Jill Sherman

JOHN Smith's decision not to use Prime Minister's questions on Tuesday to attack Mr Major on the European veto underlines Labour's dilemma about its tactics for the Euro-elections.

Mr Smith is keen to exploit Tory divisions over the veto, but he fears that if Labour intervenes too blatantly Mr Major will play the nationalistic card and accuse the Labour Party of selling Britain down the Loire.

With private polling showing that the country still regards the Tories as the best defender of national interests, Labour cannot afford to ally itself too closely with Jacques Delors, the European Commission president. Polls taken last autumn also show that more people now want to get out of Europe than at the last European elections in 1989.

Mr Major had his script ready on Tuesday but Mr Smith chose to raise the issue of VAT. The Prime Minister had to use an intervention by Giles Radice, the Labour MP for Durham North, to accuse Mr Smith of being "the people of Brussels".

Labour is deliberately being backward in coming forward over whether it supports the Government's efforts to reach a compromise on the European veto. Last weekend Dr Jack Cunningham, the shadow Foreign Secretary, indicated that the party was in favour of a blocking minority of 27.

Yesterday party officials were less specific. "Why should we decide between 23 and 27. We need to do what we have to do to ensure that we get enlargement," one said. "We do not want the Government to come back having secured a compromise and then accuse us of being prepared to lie down and be rolled over for 27." Even Euro-enthusiasts are relatively happy to accept this line, agreed by the shadow Cabinet last week. "There is no point in being too far ahead of the Tories," one pro-European MP said.

Publicly Labour is warning the Tories against jeopardising enlargement. Yesterday Mr Smith argued that enlargement is in Britain's economic interest. In a radio interview in Birmingham he accused the Tories of using the dispute to deflect attention from tax.

MP renews demand for detention centre visit

By Robert Morgan

THE Home Office came under renewed pressure yesterday to allow MPs to visit a detention centre where asylum seekers are reported to be on hunger strike.

Max Madden, Labour MP for Bradford West, complained in the Commons that permission to visit Campsfield detention centre, near Kildington in Oxfordshire, had been withdrawn. He said that on Tuesday night he had been given clearance by Charles Wardle, the prisons minister, to make a visit today and to talk to staff and detainees. But yesterday morning the visit had been cancelled.

Mr Madden called for a Commons statement from Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, who had "consistently refused" to make a statement about what was going on at Campsfield. Jeremy Corbyn (Lab, Islington North) complained that Mr Howard had refused to see a delegation of MPs, and Robert Cryer (Lab, Bradford South) asked whether it would be a breach of privilege if ministers sought to prevent MPs from doing their duty. Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, declined to comment on Mr Cryer's point as it was hypothetical, and said she had no control over ministerial conduct.

Later today MPs will have an opportunity to raise the issue with Tony Newton, Leader of the Commons. The centre, which is run by Group 4, the security firm, was opened last November and at one time up to 200 people were held there.

In Parliament

Commons (2.30): Questions: Agriculture, fisheries and food; Prime Minister. Debate on European farm prices. Lords (5): Transport Police (Jurisdiction) Bill, second reading. Police and Magistrates' Courts: Bill, third reading.

Smith urged to fill party policy vacuum

By Jill Sherman, Political Correspondent

JOHN Smith will be pressed today from the right and the left of his party to spell out Labour's economic strategy in the run-up to the local government elections in May.

Peter Mandelson, Labour MP for Hartlepool and one of the party's arch modernisers, has joined the leftwinger Peter Hain, MP for Neath, in urging the Labour Leader to show a clear sense of direction.

Several shadow cabinet members are also privately impatient of Mr Smith's ultra-cautious approach which has led to accusations that the party is in a policy vacuum.

Labour's economic policy commission, chaired by Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, is drawing up an interim report for this year's party conference, but details of Labour's economic policy are not expected until 1995.

Mr Mandelson warns that canvassers for the forthcoming elections will inevitably be



Mandelson: calling for sense of direction

asked: "What will Labour do instead?"

The general election manifesto has still to be written, but it is important to start preparing the electorate for policy changes to come, he argues in an article in today's *Tribune*.

"We do need to share our world-view and articulate the themes and principles which

will guide Labour in government," Mr Mandelson says. "In no area is this more crucial than in relation to the economy."

The MP says the party has only two years to make its case. Labour should first offer a convincing diagnosis of Britain's economic problems. "Second, we must show that we have a worked-out — and workable — alternative. Third, we must win voters' confidence in our ability to intervene sensibly in the economy and deliver what we promise."

Labour has to destroy the Tories' credibility and make the crucial link between high tax and economic failure, he says. But he warns against specific tax and spending pledges.

Mr Hain, who was recently ousted as *Tribune* secretary, makes similar arguments in this month's *Charist* magazine. "It is one thing to avoid

specific policy commitments this early in the electoral cycle," he says, "but that should not be an excuse for dodging general commitments. Indeed a failure to give commitments in principle has placed party frontbenchers in a position where they are seen to be hiding something."

"This is not just demoralising for members. It breeds voter distrust: precisely the problem the leadership's stance of prudence and circumspection was supposed to overcome."

Mr Hain says that Labour should be laying down basic principles on tax such as redistribution from the rich to the poor. It should also be firmer on pledging partial repeal of VAT on fuel. Earlier this month Mr Smith indicated that he would consider reducing the rate of VAT on fuel from 17.5 per cent to 5 per cent if Labour assumed power.

Brown fails to make old enemy an ally

If the Tories do defy gravity and win a fifth term, it may again be primarily because of tax. That may seem perverse ahead of the first instalment next month of record tax increases, and when Labour has, for the first time, moved into a big poll lead on tax. But the issue helped Labour to lose the last two elections and it remains the party's most vulnerable area.

Gordon Brown has been doing his best to neutralise the issue by his persistence over the past year. He has repeatedly pinned tax increases on the Tories as evidence of incompetence and economic failure, and to undermine their claim to be a low-tax party. By contrast, he argues, Labour wants to link decisions on tax to the benefits arising from spending.

That approach has succeeded in forcing the Tories on to the defensive. At the last election, the Tories were ahead on taxes and three-quarters of the public believed that taxes would rise under a Kinnock Government.

But now, according to the latest ICM poll, Labour is ahead on this issue by 34 percentage points to 18.

Labour should be able to sustain that lead for some time, but perhaps not long enough. Treasury ministers will use the unpopularity of the coming tax increases to press this spring for a further squeeze on public spending. This is in the hope of cutting taxes in the November 1995 Budget, possibly the last before an election. Ministers

than resolves the issue. It is inherently implausible to present Labour as the party of low spending and low taxes. The party has not offered any examples of programmes it would cut. After all, if Labour stands for anything, it is for an active public sector, whether this is dressed up in fashionable jargon as "enabling" or in partnership with the private sector.

Mr Brown has sought to make spending and tax com-

mitments more acceptable by floating trial balloons on hypothecation, or earmarking of taxes. The Liberal Democrats have made much of their proposal to raise income tax by 1p in the pound, if necessary, to pay for education. Several American states have sought to escape from this predicament by shifting the tax burden. Voters in Michigan last week approved a ballot motion sharply increasing the state's

sales tax and trebling the state tax on cigarettes specifically to help to finance its budget for schools and a cut in property taxes. Faced with big state governments have cut income and property taxes via higher sales taxes.

There is no evidence, either in America or in Britain, of any lessening in public opposition to higher direct taxes. John Smith's claim two years ago that only the better-off would pay more in taxes under Labour failed to convince. Most voters still believe that higher top tax rates will adversely affect them.

Mr Brown cannot hold the dam on spending pledges for ever, however hedged they are. The big tactical advantage which Labour now has on taxes is bound to be eroded nearer the election. All Mr Brown can realistically hope to do is to limit the Tories' advantage on what has been one of its strongest issues.

PETER RIDDELL

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Peking banks on trade weakening US rights stance

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER
IN WASHINGTON

■ The Treasury and Commerce Departments have been in open revolt at the prospect of jeopardising trade with the world's fastest-growing market

WARREN Christopher, the US Secretary of State, is struggling to prevent the collapse of the Clinton Administration's China policy in the wake of Peking's blunt rejection of his demands that it must improve its human rights practice.

Since Mr Christopher's return from Peking last week the Treasury and Commerce Departments, backed by corporate America, have been in open revolt at the prospect of the Administration's jeopardising American trade with the world's fastest-growing market.

In addition, Henry Kissinger, Lawrence Eagleburger, Cyrus Vance, and other leading members of the US foreign policy establishment have argued strongly that ending China's "most favoured nation" trading status would most hurt the Chinese businessmen who are spearheading their country's gradual liberalisation and alienate China further at a moment when its support for ending North Korea's nuclear weap-

ons programme is critical. These strident public protests have seriously undermined Mr Christopher's attempt to convince China's leaders during his ill-fated visit that America was serious about revoking the trading status this summer if Peking did not make "significant overall progress" on human rights.

At a rare joint meeting of the National Economic and National Security Councils at the White House on Tuesday, Mr Christopher extracted a commitment from the Commerce and Treasury Departments that they will support publicly the Administration's stand on human rights.

The National Security Council instructed all Cabinet secretaries to present Mr Christopher's Peking visit as a success, not the humiliating diplomatic rebuff it was generally portrayed as being. Mr Christopher himself has

launched a media offensive to bolster his shaky position, arguing that China's leaders were inching towards US demands and America should not back down. The more prevalent Washington view is that Peking, having witnessed the absolute priority President Clinton attaches to opening new markets for American exports, believes that Mr Clinton lacks the political will to disrupt its trade with such a huge economy and has decided to call its bluff.

China is expected to increase its imports by an estimated \$200 billion (£135 billion) over the next two years. The US aerospace and telecommunications industries are particularly well positioned, and the Administration calculates that every \$1 billion of exports creates 20,000 American jobs.

Diary, page 18

General defends arming of Israeli settlers

FROM BEN LYNFIELD
IN JERUSALEM
AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER
IN CAIRO

ISRAELI top soldier yesterday gave an impassioned defence of the army's practices in the occupied territories in the face of tough questions from the commission of enquiry investigating the Hebron massacre.

Major General Ehud Barak, asked whether stricter army policies towards settlers might have prevented Baruch Goldstein, a Jewish settler, from murdering 29 Palestinians at prayer, replied: "Israelis are threatened in Judea and Samaria and there are many cases of Jews being attacked. They are issued weapons in self-defence."

With concern over the safety of two million Arabs living under military rule still riding high, Faisal Husseini, the Palestine Liberation Organisation leader in the occupied territories, announced yesterday that Israeli security proposals were so far inadequate to bring the PLO back to the suspended peace talks.

He was speaking before Israeli negotiators arrived in Cairo to resume their talks with the PLO about Palestinian security demands. A senior PLO official said that the Israeli delegation would hand over Jerusalem's response to PLO security demands.

Addressing the enquiry, General Barak defended a ban on shooting at Jewish settlers, an order uncovered by the commission two weeks ago, but said troops should have known it would not apply in such a situation. "A massacre is a massacre and you don't need special orders to tell you what to do," he said. He conceded, however, that some of his officers may have believed that the order applied to all situations.

General Barak said Israel was facing "similar dilemmas" in confronting the Palestinian uprising as the French army faced during Algeria's war of independence, but that unlike France it was succeeding in avoiding war crimes and was preserving "a framework of values".



Walter Lantz, the cartoon film animator who became a multi-millionaire through his art. He is shown here at a "photo-call" in 1990.

Woody's champion dies

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

THE creator of animation's most irascible bird, Woody Woodpecker, died on Tuesday, it was announced yesterday. He was 93. Walter Lantz, who was still working in the last week of his life, had become a multi-millionaire through the licensing of his creations, which included Andy Panda and Oswald the rabbit.

However, it was Woody, the mildly manic woodpecker, who proved most lucrative. The inspiration for the bird came during Lantz's honeymoon in 1941 with the actress Gracie Stafford, who was later to provide the woodpecker's famous booming laugh. The wood-

pecker that caught Lantz's attention at their lakeside cottage did so by pecking not at wood but at asbestos shingles, in which it made holes to fill with worms which in turn provided food for worms that the woodpecker would come back and eat. "It just goes to show how smart these woodpeckers are," Lantz said.

Lantz was among the last survivors of the old school of animation pioneered by Walt Disney, who insisted that his cartoon heroes and villains alike should have strong, believable personalities and that their drawings should be at least based on the real creature.

Fears for French in Algeria

Paris: France yesterday condemned the murders of two Frenchmen in an Algerian suburb, and urged its nationals to return home unless their presence in the north African country was vital. The Foreign Ministry said the stabbing to death of the two men on Tuesday night, blamed on Muslim fundamentalists fighting to overthrow the army-backed government, was "an act of barbarity". (Reuters)

Burundi battle

Bujumbura: Troops and Hutu tribal gunmen battled in suburbs of the Burundi capital and the Interior Minister estimated that more than 1,000 people had been killed in two days. (Reuters)

Kuwait plea

London: Sheikh Salim al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister, is to urge the Archbishop of Canterbury to back efforts to secure the release of 625 Kuwaitis believed to be held in Iraqi prisons.

Magic returns

Los Angeles: Earvin "Magic" Johnson, the basketball star who retired in 1991 on learning that he was HIV positive, is to return to the sport as head coach for his old team, the Los Angeles Lakers.

Pact signed

Brussels: Georgia has signed the Partnership for Peace programme of military co-operation with Nato, becoming the thirteenth country of the former Soviet bloc to do so since January. (AFP)

JFK on air

Berlin: Radio "JFK", a radio station named after former US President John F. Kennedy has gone on air broadcasting a mix of news and 1960s American pop music aimed at yuppies. (Reuters)

Nun on run

Cairo: A Roman Catholic nun who said she was rushing her injured dog to a vet when she refused to stop for armed police during a car chase in New York State was fined for reckless driving. (AP)

Clinton counsel in trouble

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE position of yet another senior White House counsel yesterday was in jeopardy after the disclosure that he had not only failed to pay taxes for a nanny but had sought to conceal the fact.

The official, William Kennedy, is the associate White House counsel responsible for checking the backgrounds of potential Administration employees to ensure they have not been guilty of such lapses. His departure would leave Hillary Clinton as the Administration's sole surviving member of the Rose law firm after the suicide of Vincent Foster, the deputy White House counsel, and Webster Hubbell's resignation as associate Attorney-General. The White House yesterday insisted that Mr Kennedy, a former

Rose partner and colleague of Mrs Clinton, had no plans to resign, but added the telling caveat "at this point".

In a separate development yesterday, the Wall Street Journal reported that an in-



Mrs Clinton: former colleague under fire

vestigative reporter was recently knocked unconscious outside his Little Rock hotel room by an unknown attacker who then removed pages from his notebook. The assault came after numerous stories of attacks or threats against people hostile to President Clinton. Few of these stories have been firmly corroborated, however, and none has been linked to the White House.

Also in some trouble yesterday was Roger Altman, the deputy Treasury Secretary, after he admitted yet another improper discussion with White House officials about the progress of a supposedly independent Whitewater investigation. This is the third time Mr Altman has revised his story.

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Pretoria imposes administrators on uneasy Ciskei

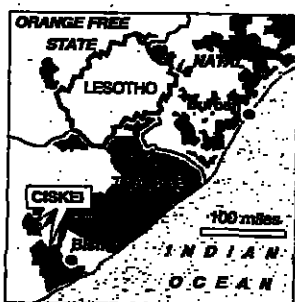
FROM INIGO GILMORE IN BISHO, CISKEI

AN UNEASY calm prevailed in Bisho, the Ciskei capital, yesterday after demonstrations by civil servants and police officers and the removal of the homeland ruler, Brigadier Joshua "Oupa" Gqozo.

Members of the Ciskei defence force patrolled the almost empty streets in armoured vehicles, but there was little sign of unrest. The soldiers said they were not expecting trouble because the brigadier had been removed.

There were conflicting reports on the whereabouts of the brigadier, whom the South African Transitional Executive Council decided should be replaced by two administrators. A group of policemen insisted that he was under guard in the government buildings on the edge of the city. But at the gate to the government building soldiers dismissed the suggestion and unconvincingly claimed they did not know where he was, although they conceded that his wife was inside. There were rumours that he had been taken to East London,

about 50 miles away. At Bisho police college, striking policemen, who earlier had seized control of the premises and taken 15 officers hostage, seemed relaxed and cheerful. They insisted that the siege was over and some had even returned to keep a watchful



eye on government property. At the main entrance to the college Andile Lamana, 33, a warrant officer, produced a list of demands that were to be put before a police meeting held at the college yesterday. He said they had asked for Brigadier Gqozo to attend, but

they were prepared to meet executive council representatives if that was not possible.

The demands included that pension funds should be paid in full to each member of the force before the end of this month; the suspension of all officers and members of the Ciskei defence force involved in corruption in Ciskei police funds; that allowances be backdated; a medical scheme be set up for single members and their children; a disaster fund for families who lose a police officer in the course of duty; and danger allowances on a par with the South African police force.

Mr Lamana said, if their demands were not met, then all officers would strike indefinitely. He said the police and Ciskei people were still resentful about the brigadier. He added that it was fortunate that Brigadier Gqozo had not gone to the Bisho stadium earlier in the afternoon to meet striking civil servants. "The people are very angry," he said. "Many want the brigadier dead."



Somali children fighting over a US soldier's canned drink as, 15 months after the Americans landed in a blaze of glory to feed starving Somalis, they are shipping away without fanfare after the collapse of United Nations-

sponsored peace talks in Nairobi (David Alexander writes in Mogadishu). "For the most part the hunger has gone away, but the mission isn't a success until we get the warlords working on something positive," said

Lieutenant Patrick Lueb, a US army intelligence officer. The Americans were ordered out of Somalia by President Clinton after 18 US Army Rangers died in an abortive attempt last October to capture Muhammad

Farrah Aidid, the Somali warlord. "The Americans stopped the famine, but when they started interfering in Somali politics and fighting one faction, that's where they went wrong," said one local aid worker.

ANC threatens force to bring down Buthelezi

Michael Hamlyn examines the collapse of South Africa's homelands, leaving Chief Buthelezi as the only regional leader resisting the electoral process

A CALL for Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi to be toppled by force in KwaZulu was made yesterday by Jeff Radebe, a leading African National Congress militant.

The threat to Chief Buthelezi came the day after Brigadier Oupa Gqozo, the military ruler of Ciskei, stepped down because of unrest among his public servants, and ten days after the dismissal of Chief Lucas Mangope in Bophuthatswana. One by one the homelands are falling, leaving Chief Buthelezi as the only homeland leader resisting the new constitution and the electoral process.

Yesterday Pieter Goosen, the South African Ambassador to Ciskei, and the Rev Bongani Blessing Finca, a cleric opposed to the homeland governments, were named the administrators to run Ciskei.

Jacob Zuma, the ANC candidate for the premiership of KwaZulu, said he supported the call for the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) to take control of KwaZulu, but only if the freedom and fairness of elections in the area were still in doubt after troops of the National Peacekeeping Force and the South African Defence Force had been deployed there.

"Our view is that the TEC has a responsibility to ensure that fair elections take place in

Natal. If taxpayers' money is used to prevent us from getting to democracy, then the TEC will know what to do," Mr Zuma, Deputy Secretary-General of the ANC, said.

The ANC is to begin a campaign of mass action in Natal tomorrow to demonstrate that Zulu want to take part in the elections.

The ten homelands were the product of a policy to restrict black political activity to tribal homelands, which would become independent countries. The system broke down because the policy involved giving the three quarters of the population which was black only 14 per cent of the land, and most of that with poor soil.

All the remaining homeland governments, except KwaZulu, have accepted that their territories will be reincorporated into South Africa after the election, and are taking part in the TEC.

Lord Carrington, the former British Foreign Secretary, has been named as one of the mediators who would be asked to solve the constitutional impasse between the Inkatha Freedom Party and the ANC. A joint committee decided on Tuesday that a three or four-man team would be ideal, and suggested that it should be led by Henry Kissinger, former American Secretary of State.

Leakey quits amid fears for wildlife

BY SAM KILEY

RICHARD Leakey, who has been credited with saving the rhinoceros and elephant populations of Kenya from the poachers' bullet, resigned yesterday as director of Kenya Wildlife Services after his role at the head of the agency was redefined by President Moi. His resignation came amid

tricks. That is equivalent to the total number of elephants killed by poachers last year.

The popular tourist destination of Lamu, where tens of thousands of visitors go each year in the hope of seeing the rare sight of elephants swimming between islands with only their trunks visible above the water, has been especially badly hit by poaching. Last week eight of the remaining 50 elephants on Manda Island were killed. All were females or young animals.

Dr Leakey's resignation came after he was sent back to work by the President who rejected his earlier resignation offer. But Mr Moi set new requirements which Dr Leakey said were unacceptable. The requirements are also likely to result in an immediate end to a total of nearly \$300 million in foreign funding for Kenyan wildlife.

Dr Leakey said yesterday that, because three-quarters of wildlife was outside national parks and reserves, three-quarters of the resources available to the wildlife services should be disbursed outside the protected areas, and a quarter of tourist gate revenues should be given to communities living near the parks.



Leakey: credited with saving elephants

news of a big rise in elephant poaching throughout the country in the period when he was on leave and the President was considering his offer in January to resign.

Since then between 25 and 30 elephants have been slaughtered in the Lamu, Laikipia and Maralal dis-

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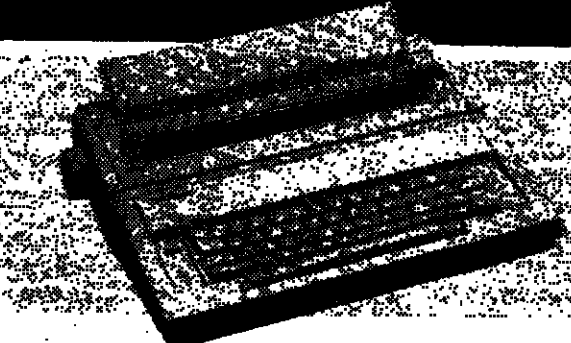
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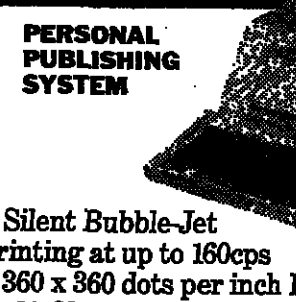
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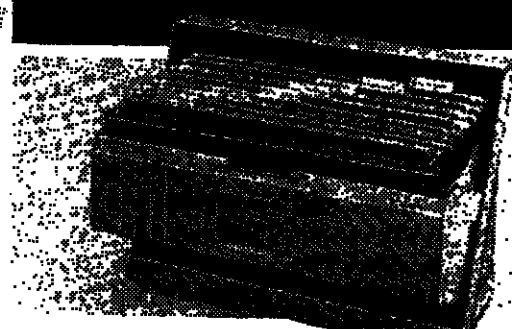


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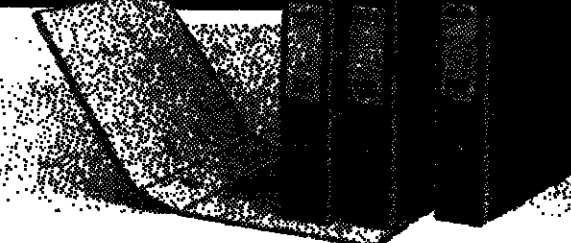
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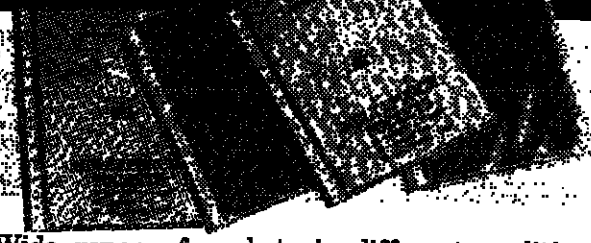
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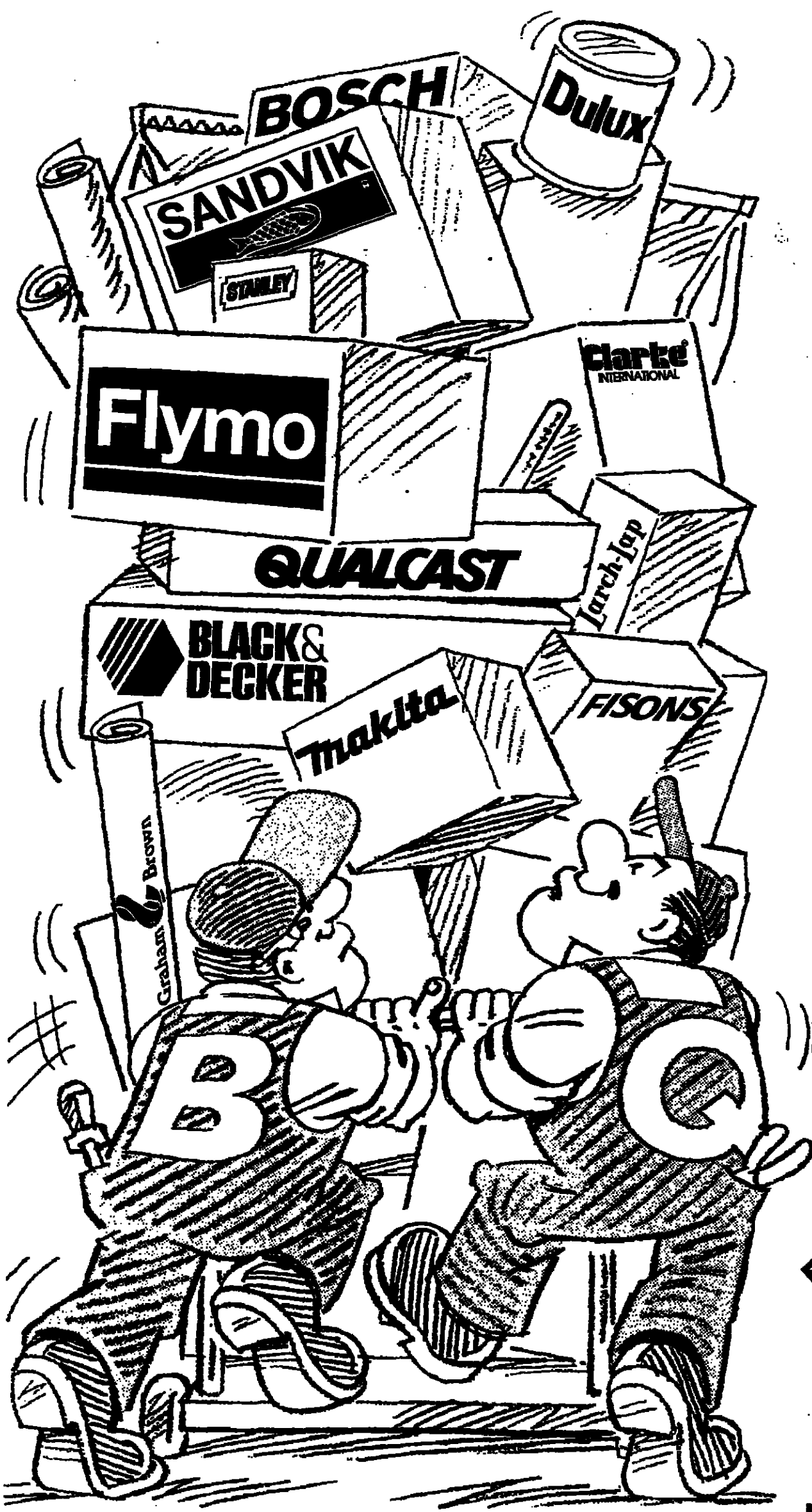
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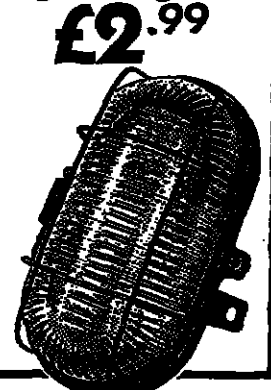
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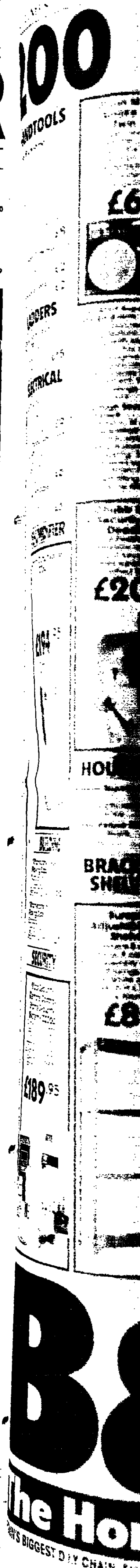
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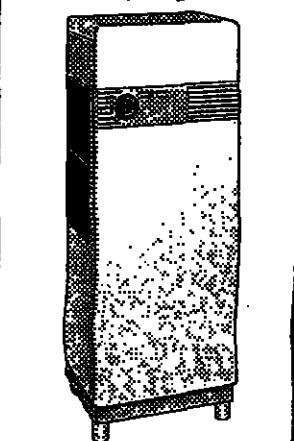
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For lighting circuits only. Not to exceed 14amps. 1.0mm² x 50m reel. £5.79

DEHUMIDIFIER

Amcor Dehumidifier D250
Variable setting humidity control. 10 litre water tank capacity. Max. water extraction 8.5 litres per day. Features full container cut-off and indicator light, continuous drainage facility, automatic defrost. £194.95



BUILDING

'Thamesstone' Pressed Paving Slabs
Natural, red or sandstone. 450mm x 450mm. 99p each

'Thamesstone' York Paving Slabs
Sandstone, light grey or red. 450mm x 450mm. £1.19 each

SECURITY

Moss Security Remote Control Home Security System MS2000
Cordless, battery powered passive infra-red detector. Senses movement and transmits a radio signal to activate the alarm. Detection coverage adjustable, and there is an audible 'low power' indicator. £189.95



Dicon Micro 300 Smoke Alarms

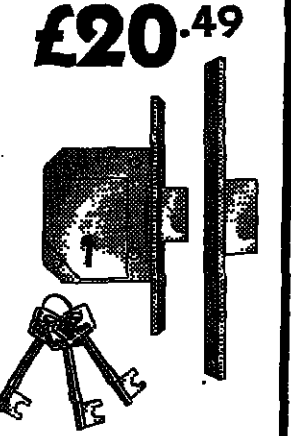
Twin Pack
With insect resistant sensors, automatic low battery warning, full function test button, loud 85dB alarm, power-on indicator. Easy to fit, batteries and fixings included. £6.49 each



First Alert Super Smoke Alarm
Full function remote torch testing feature, ionisation sensing with loud 85dB alarm, 30 day low battery warning signal, missing battery indicator, hinged cover for easy battery replacement. With 9V battery, fixings and manual. £7.99

Yale High Security Door Lock
Designed to fit all solid and glass panelled wooden doors. Drill, saw and force resistant. Automatic deadlocking. 3 keys and fixing screws supplied. Brass/steel finish. PBS1 Standard fitting or PBS2 Narrow fitting. £54.95 each

Chubb 5 Lever Hi-Security Mortice Deadlock
36114 Resistant to drill, lockdown and force attack. 3 keys and fixing screws supplied. Brass effect finish. £20.49



HOUSEHOLD

Vileda Supermop 9695
Cleans efficiently, dries quickly. £3.99

Physu Refuse Bin
With lid. Black. 80 litres. £5.99

BRACKETS/SHELVING

'Europa 4' Adjustable Steel Shelving
Contains 8 uprights, 4 shelves, 8 corner plates, with assembly instructions and all fixings. Available in white or red. 150cm H x 70cm W x 30cm D. £8.99 each



Modular 5 Tier Pine Shelf Unit

Natural solid pine, easily varnished, stained or painted. Adjustable shelf heights, pre-drilled for easy assembly, fixings supplied. 1710mm x 750mm x 3077mm (approx). £16.99

Crown Merton Handy Speaker Wall Brackets
CM6075P
1 pair adjustable brackets. Accepts most speakers 4ins-9ins deep and up to 35lbs weight. £12.49 each

Crown Merton Small Screen TV Wall Bracket
CM4074P
Pivots to 360 degrees, reversible tilt function. Accepts most TVs up to 14ins screen size and up to 35lbs in weight. Black. £13.99

DOORS

Carolina Stained Exterior Door
78 ins x 33 ins x 1 1/4 ins. £54.99

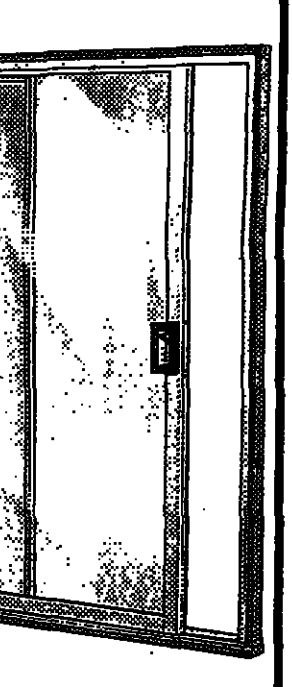
Kentucky Stained Exterior Door
78 ins x 33 ins x 1 1/4 ins. £49.95

Polar Patio Door
White polyester durable paint finish. Double-glazed clear 4mm toughened glass and non-corrosive fittings. Reversible for left or right hand opening. High security 2 point lock.

Model 5
1464mm x 2000mm. £169.99

Model 6
1769mm x 2000mm. £189.99

Model 8
2279mm x 2000mm. £239.99



BATHROOM

Heron Edwardian Print Side Panel and Pivot Door
Gold effect non-corrosive frame, clear toughened safety glass with Edwardian print, left or right hand opening, ornate handle on pivot door. Side Panel 411050. £74.99

Pivot Door 411000. £99.99

Heron Edwardian Print Fully Hinged Shower Screen (for baths)
Gold effect non-corrosive half frame, clear toughened safety glass with Edwardian print. For left or right hand use and watertight (with PVC seals). £34.99

Shower Tray Integral Panel
800mm x 800mm. White. £26.49

TAPS

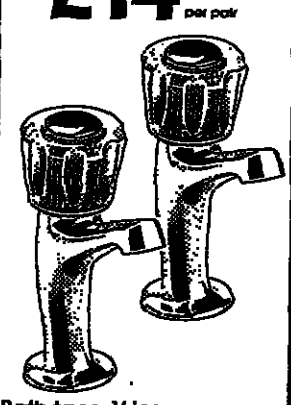
'Victorian Bathroom Range' Bathroom Taps
Bath taps, 1/2ins. Chrome plated. £34.95 each

Gold effect plated. £49.95 each

Basin taps, 1/2ins. £29.99 each

Gold effect plated. £34.95 each

'Ferrara Cucina Range' Bathroom Taps
One 1/2ins dual flow Monobloc Sink Mixer, 229mm spout, chrome plated or white. £39.95 each

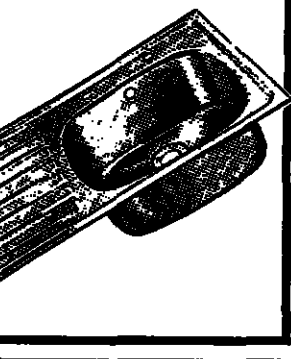


Bath taps, 1/2ins. £11.99 each

Basin taps, 1/2ins. £9.99 each

SINKS

Carron Stainless Steel Inset Sinktop
Single bowl, single drainer (left or right hand drainer available). 940mm x 485mm. £26.99 each



OCCASIONAL FURNITURE

Portwood Tubular Metal Furniture
Easy to assemble. Black.

3 Shelf Wall Unit
1120mm H x 655mm W x 355mm D. £19.99

5 Shelf Wall Unit
1820mm H x 655mm W x 355mm D. £39.99

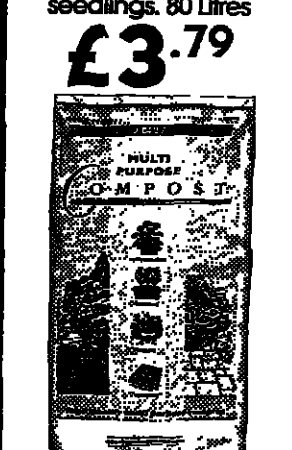
Hi-Fi Trolley
1085mm H x 655mm W x 355mm D. £29.99

Director's Chair
Red, black or white canvas with wooden frame. £9.99 each



GARDENING

B&Q Multi Purpose Compost
For potting plants, cuttings, baskets and seedlings. 80 litres. £3.79



J. Arthur Bower's 'New Horizon' Peat Free Multipurpose Compost
Perfectly balanced for strong plant and root development. Includes perlite and vermiculite to improve aeration, drainage and moisture retention. 80 litres. £3.79

B&Q Growing Bag
For tomatoes and other crops. 37 litres. 99p

B&Q Peat Free Growing Bag
The alternative to a peat-based growing bag. 35 litres. 99p

B&Q Colour Multipurpose Compost
Peat free, high quality coir based compost for sowing, potting, cuttings and hanging baskets. 80 litres. £3.79

B&Q Decorative Chipped Bark
The totally natural way to suppress weeds and improve the appearance of your garden. 80 litres. £5.99

B&Q Ground and Composted Bark
A long lasting natural soil conditioner, surface mulch and planting aid. 80 litres. £4.99

Fisons Maxi Lawn Spreader
For easy and accurate application of Fisons granular lawn products. 18 inch width for easy application and marker wheels for extra accuracy. £9.99

Fisons Evergreen Extra
Lawn feed with weedkiller and mosskiller. 100sq.m. £4.99

B&Q Triple Action Lawn Care
A granular lawn fertilizer containing essential plant food specially balanced for lawn feeding. Includes selected weed killers for control of most lawn weeds and moss. 7kg treats 100sq.m. (approx). £6.29



Hazeltick 'Cascade' Waterfall Pump
With pump filter, 2 fountain heads and 1-piece with flow rate control. Max. flow (approx) 1250 litres per hour. Creates fountain heights up to 4ft approx. £34.99

Hazeltick 'Cascade 850 LV' Fountain and Waterfall Pump
Low voltage, maximum flow rate 1250 litres per hour. £49.99

Wilkinson Sword Classic 8" Notched Shear
P1264
Chromed heat treated carbon steel blades and nylon handles. £16.99

Chillington Chum Flatpack Garden Wheelbarrow
3cu.ft. capacity, easy assembly. Seamless one-piece pressed steel pan with rolled lip. £14.99

Bio Shower-proof Mini Slug Pellets
No.4 size treats 850sq.m. £1.99

ICI Pathclear
For weed-free paths and drives. 5 sachets. £4.99

ICI Weedol Fast Acting Weedkiller
Versatile for use all round the garden. 5 sachets. £4.99

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B&Q Granular Weed and Feed

Easily applied mini granules which kill weeds and feed lawns. 3.5kg treats 120sq.yards. £5.49

B&Q Growmore
General fertilizer for flowers, fruit and vegetables that supplies three plant nutrients - nitrogen, phosphate and potash. 3kg. £3.99

B&Q Bone Meal
Sterilised organic fertilizer, supplies soil with slow acting phosphate and nitrogen which encourage root development. 4kg. £5.99

PBI Baby Bio
Made with humus and seaweed, feeds all houseplants. 55ml bottle. 65p

Phostrogen Plant Food
The all-purpose soluble plant food with trace elements for root and foliar feeding. 1.216kg. £2.99

Phostrogen Easyfeeder
Fits on to your garden hose. Handle twists for on/off, with non-return anti-vacuum valve. £4.99

ICI Miracle-Gro
Concentrated all-purpose water soluble plant food. Feeds plants through roots and leaves. 1kg. £2.99

ICI Miracle-Gro No-Clog Garden & Lawn Feeder
Fits standard garden hosepipe, with 500g of Miracle-Gro in jar. £4.99

Ungarden Bulbs Value Packs
Mixed Freesias, size 5/6, pack of 30 bulbs. £1.99

Mixed Lilies, size 12/14, pack of 8 bulbs. £1.99

Mixed Dutch Iris, size 8/10, pack of 30 bulbs. £1.99

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B&Q Hanging Basket Kit
Contains 12ins wire hanging basket, fibre liner, compost, and plant food. £4.99

Clematis Climbing/Wall Shrub
In 3 litre container. £4.99

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In 3 litre container. £4.99

Alpines
Assorted varieties in 7cm container. 79p each

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Various colours in 9cm container. 79p each

Harrostar 'Classic' Water But
With lid and tap. 1 year guarantee - will not split, crack or corrode. Holds 50 gallons/227 litres. £23.99

Holds 37 gallons/168 litres. £18.99

Hazeltick 'Cascade 850 LV' Fountain and Waterfall Pump
With pump filter, 2 fountain heads and 1-piece with flow rate control. Max. flow (approx) 1250 litres per hour. Creates fountain heights up to 4ft approx. £34.99

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Low voltage, maximum flow rate 1250 litres per hour. £49.99

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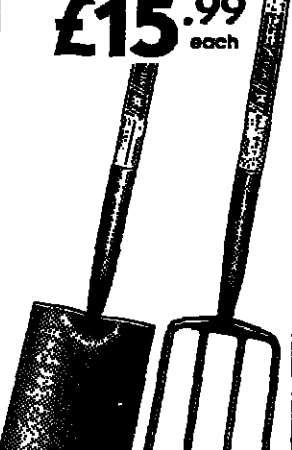
ICI Pathclear
For weed-free paths and drives. 5 sachets. £4.99

ICI Weedol Fast Acting Weedkiller
Versatile for use all round the garden. 5 sachets. £4.99

USE PESTICIDES SAFELY - READ THE LABEL BEFORE YOU BUY

Wilkinson Sword 'Classic' Digging Spade or Fork

Hot forged solid steel head, weather resistant waxed ashwood shaft and tough polypropylene handle. £15.99 each



Flymo 'Hovervac' Turbo Compact

350 Haver Mower 14ins cut, 1300W motor, integrated grassbox with turbo-vacuum collection and 20m cable. £139.50

Yard King Petrol Mower 21615
21ins cut, 3.75hp Briggs and Stratton engine, seven position height adjusters, weather resistant adjustable 2 position handle and grass collection bag. £199.99

Yard King Petrol Mower 21745
21ins cut, 5hp Briggs and Stratton Quantum engine, single lever height adjustment, weather resistant adjustable 2 position handle and grass collection bag. £259.99

Yard King Petrol Mower 20211
20ins cut, 3.5hp Briggs and Stratton engine, manual height adjustment and weather resistant handle. £107.99



Flymo 'Mutt Trim 200' Electric Grass Trimmer and Lawn Edger
8ins cut, 250W motor, with auto feed, double action safety switch, extended guard around cutting head and 16 metres cable. £39.49

McCulloch Petrol Trimmer MT270
Ideal for general purpose trimming and edging. 28cc engine, 15ins cut with 2-sting head and goggles. £84.99

Black & Decker GL575C 'Trim n Edge' Grass Trimmer and Lawn Edger
10ins cut, 340W motor, with auto feed, 10 metre cutting line, edging facility and 12 metres cable. £44.50

McCulloch 'Blower Vac' Blower and Outdoor Vacuum Cleaner
21cc, 2 cycle engine, 120mph air velocity (blowing). Dislodges leaves, dirt and other debris from inaccessible areas in a fraction of time it would take to sweep. Also converts quickly into an outdoor vacuum cleaner - picks up and mulches leaves from flower beds, from under hedges and other hard to reach places. £99.99

Flymo 'Gardenvac' Garden Vacuum/Blower
650W motor, 100mph airspeed, with 16 metre cable. Designed to collect a wide range of debris from leaves and grass clippings to larger items such as aluminium cans - suitable for collecting dry, damp or wet debris. Fully assembled and ready-to-use, supplied complete with shoulder harness and collection bag. £79.50

Black & Decker GX530C 'Hovermaster' Hover Mower
12 inch/30cm cut, 1250W motor with blade brake, safety lock-off switch, grass collection box and 15 metre cable. £134.50

Qualcast 'Hover-Safe 25' Electric Hover Mower
10ins/25cm cut, 800W motor, with 2 cutting heights and 40ft cable. £44.50

Flymo 'Sprintmaster' XE30 Electric Hover Mower
12ins cut, 1150W motor, with grass collection and 15m cable. £99.99

Garden Club Roma Collection Stacking Chair
High back. White resin. £6.99 each

Warwick White Resin Patio Set
Comprising 66cm round resin table and 4 low back resin chairs. £24.95 per set

Bar-Be-Quick Instant Barbecue
Ideal for gardens, picnics, camping, fishing. Cooking area 230mm x 290mm. £3.49

LEISURE/ BARBECUES

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LEISURE/ BARBECUES

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Rush to expand EU is blamed on Swedish law

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR
AND NICHOLAS GEORGE
IN STOCKHOLM

THE Swedish constitution is the main consideration behind the urgency of the timetable for the four applications to join the European Union, a senior British official said yesterday. Under Swedish law a bill which involves changes to the country's constitution must be approved by two separate parliaments. The Swedish parliament is dissolved in June, with a general election in September, and unless the constitutional bill paving the way for the treaty can be presented to the current parliament, the final decision might have to wait a further four years until after the next general election.

Swedish officials were yesterday urgently studying ways around the obstacle. One would be to allow a vote on the constitutional bill before the outcome of the negotiations with the EU were known.

An alternative would be to present the constitutional change to the new parliament, and then call a general election shortly afterwards so that a fresh parliament could also add its approval.

This would be a highly unorthodox move, breaking the practice of fixed-term parliaments but it is not impossible for the Prime Minister to call a snap election.

Sources in Sweden said yesterday that the worries about the timetable have subsided as constitutional experts have insisted that Swedish membership would not be jeopardised by such technicalities.

A failure to settle quickly the dispute over EU minority voting rights could jeopardise the whole enlargement process. Ulf Dinkelspiel, Sweden's Minister of European

■ The requirement for two separate parliaments to approve any Bill changing the constitution could delay a final decision on EU entry by four years

Affairs, warned yesterday. Sweden, Finland and Norway have been relaxed about the dispute which has pitted Britain and Spain against the ten other EU members. However, concern is now growing that the inability of the Twelve to settle the matter will force a postponement of the Nordic countries' entry into the EU, scheduled for January 1, 1995. Any such delay would have a negative effect on the outcome of forthcoming referendums to be held on the issue in the three countries. Mr

Dinkelspiel said. A majority of voters in Norway and Sweden oppose membership and the governments face an uphill task in convincing them otherwise. In Finland a majority supports joining.

"I think we are approaching a critical point. If there is a further delay it will not be possible for the European Parliament to deal with the enlargement negotiations this spring and that will effectively delay entry," said Mr Dinkelspiel.

On a visit to Stockholm earlier this week Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, defended Britain's stance.

"I think if you in Scandinavia had a government that had found itself being out-voted all the time because its political colours don't match the political colours of most of the other governments, you will find there is a growing resistance to that," he said.

□ Brussels: Britain was not only blocking the enlargement of the European Union and driving its governments into political crisis but was also reneging on past promises. Theodoros Pangalos, the Greek minister presiding over the Union's majority voting row told MEPs yesterday.

The opposition of Britain and Spain to automatic changes in the EU voting system was wrecking the schedule for bringing up to four new states into the Union because a commitment made by all 12 governments at a summit in 1992 had been broken, Mr Pangalos said.

Leading article, page 19



Moscow: Andrei Kozirev, the Russian Foreign Minister, and Klaus Kinkel, his German counterpart, above, said yesterday that Germany would support Russia's efforts for closer ties with the European Union and other international organisations. Co-operation with the West and the G7 countries was among the issues Mr Kozirev discussed with Herr Kinkel. (AP)



French students demonstrating in Lyons amid continuing protests against the government's wages plan for young people. The administration of Edouard Balladur, the Prime Minister, is facing the threat of a full-

scale teenage rebellion as students planned new demonstrations culminating in big rallies tomorrow. The government, facing mounting criticism from its own supporters, appeared powerless to extricate itself

after mishandling an attempt to reduce unemployment among the young by allowing firms to pay them less than the minimum wage. It has watered down the proposals but demonstrations continued yesterday.

notably in Caen and La Rochelle and at Reims. In Paris, technical students went on strike. Charles Pasqua, the Interior Minister, who is deploying thousands of riot police, said he feared "serious incidents". (AFP)

Paris and Bonn outflank D-Day quarrel

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS

AFTER weeks of friction between their two governments, President Mitterrand of France and Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, yesterday announced that they would hold a joint celebration of Franco-German friendship in Heidelberg on June 8, two days after the memorial to the D-Day landings.

The two leaders, whose rapport over the past decade has been the anchor of an increasingly tight partnership, devised the plan in telephone calls as a way of easing the latest tension, symbolised by German annoyance over their

exclusion from the Allied ceremonies in Normandy. In further steps to patch up the dispute, Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, is to meet Mitterrand and other French officials in Paris today. Herr Kinkel, who is held by some French officials to be lacking in diplomatic finesse, said yesterday that there were no serious differences between the two countries and the well-being of Europe depended on Bonn and Paris getting on together.

Mitterrand's spokesman said the Heidelberg ceremony would be dedicated not to the war but the "history which our two countries have been writing together for decades". It would be attended by the youth of both countries and was the best way of putting an end to what Mitterrand considered to be an artificial controversy over D-Day. His aides say the President acknowledged that, in its handling of the Normandy anniversary and other contentious issues, France had not made sufficient allowances for the electoral pressures facing Herr Kohl.

Herr Kohl said yesterday for the first time that he had not been annoyed by his exclusion from the Normandy events. A German presence would not have been appropriate, he said.



De Gaulle: friendship was sealed in 1963

Trading giant deals blow to Hong Kong's status

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

HONG Kong's rapidly dwindling colonial status took another blow yesterday when Jardine Matheson Holdings, whose opium trade with China brought the territory under British rule in the 1840s, declared it was delisting from the local stock market at the end of the year.

The announcement came as the trench warfare between Hong Kong and Peking died to a whisper. Jardine's decision followed several years of attempts to persuade the Securities and Futures Commission to exempt the trading firm from Hong Kong's takeover code.

Jardine argued for the exemption because it claimed that when China assumes sovereignty 1997 it will encourage its Chinese friends in Hong Kong, such as Li Ka-shing, the richest man in the colony and a Hong Kong

adviser to China, to attempt to take over the company, one of whose founding families, the Keswicks, control it with less than 12 per cent of the stock.

Jardine, Hong Kong's fifth-biggest public company, with holdings in hotels, dairies and land, has just reported a 22.7 per cent increase in profits in 1993. But when it is delisted many institutions will sell their Jardine shares. Jardine directors insist the firm will continue trading in Hong Kong.

It is understood that Chris Patten, Hong Kong's Governor, took a personal interest in Jardine's dispute with the securities commission, and attempted to bridge the gap. This aroused unease in some quarters that the Governor was intervening in the working of a commission intended to be wholly independent. The commission rejected Jardine's

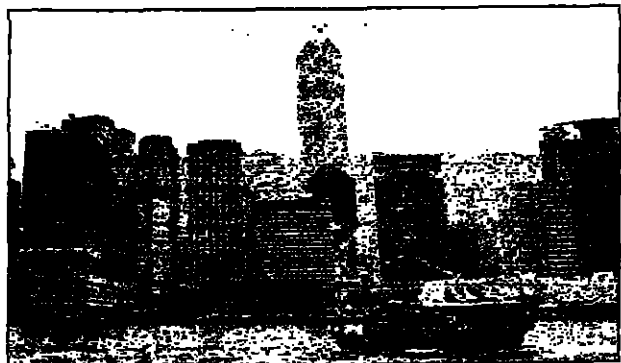
claim that it should have special status on historical and political grounds.

Jardine has been sparring with Peking since 1984, when it moved its corporate headquarters to Bermuda. Further strain occurred when the Keswick family expressed support for Mr Patten's reform programme. Yesterday Peking's spokesman here branded the Jardine decision "irresponsible". By the end of the day the stock market had risen 400 points.

Scuffles and fighting erupted outside the Legislative Council on Tuesday when enraged men from the New Territories gathered to protest against legislation intended to abolish the Manchu customary law that prohibits the 350,000 women in the territories from inheriting property. Mr Patten has signalled that he will support the legislation. Fourteen women who were demonstrating in favour of the legislation have filed complaints of assault.

In another local dispute, Mr Patten and the British Government are being accused of duplicity for having secretly amended, last July, the Royal Instructions and the Letters Patent by which the Queen rules Hong Kong. These now stipulate that when the 1995 elections for the Legislative Council are held, only 20 seats will be directly elected.

Shares fall, page 25
Pennington, page 27



A view of Hong Kong's business district, a legacy of Jardine Matheson's early pioneering skills

Smokers flee wrath to come

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

THEY are America's pariahs, hounded from restaurants, bars and other public places and forced to hide in lavatories, alleyways or cupboards. You see them huddled at the exits to office buildings, with guilt in their eyes and stains on their fingers. Others take their habit home, the only place left where they can indulge themselves without fear of rebuke or punishment. The American smoker is a dying breed.

Last week law-makers in New York considered the most sweeping anti-smoking legislation yet, which would outlaw smoking in almost every public place.

On Tuesday a congressional subcommittee in Washington voted to increase tax

on cigarettes by \$1.25 (83p) a packet, while Congress prepares to vote on a ban on smoking in schools, the first federal anti-smoking measure ever introduced.

Smoking is now forbidden in the White House and in military bases, on buses and trains and in many restaurants, while California has amassed about 300 local ordinances banning smoking in pubs, parks and offices.

Smoking regulations first began in California in the 1960s, but with mounting evidence of the dangers of passive smoking the crusade has spread countrywide.

The tobacco lobby and anti-smoking activists in Congress have been slugging it out furiously. One side points out

that 420,000 Americans are killed by tobacco annually and that advertising is luring 3,000 children to try smoking every day. The other side says the tobacco industry contributes more than \$4.5 billion in taxes every year and employs more than 90,000 Americans.

In a New York restaurant this week I saw a lone smoker puffing away in a deserted corner of the no-smoking section when another customer sat at the adjacent table. After a few moments, the newcomer demanded that the smoker either extinguish his cigarette immediately or move to his designated area. With the look of a man who has seen the vigour of sanctimoniousness, the smoker trudged wordlessly away.

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How Cuddly Dudley went native

Once the perfect Englishman abroad, Moore is finding life very unfunny

On a night just too much for Dudley Moore. To be fair, the ceremony brings out the worst in most people, but Dudley took it too much to heart. Now he finds himself facing charges for that most Californian-sounding of offences, "cohabitational abuse".

Moore and his lover, Nicole Rothschild, were watching the ceremony on television. "Something was said, and it escalated," according to a Los Angeles policeman. "I understand he grabbed her by the throat".

Perhaps it was the conspicuous success of so many of his neighbours that made Cuddly Dudley crack. Since a nomination for Arthur in 1981 his career has been in decline. He has been in analysis ever since he moved to Hollywood, and his inability to stabilise his personal life has been his most newsworthy quality. The quintessential English comedian has been recreated in a depressingly Californian mode.

Moore needs to be loved. He was born small and club-footed to working class parents in Dagenham who wanted to kill him at birth. His first seven years were spent in and out of hospital. His later success gave him the love from an audience that he had never enjoyed at home.

And even when he moved to Hollywood in the early 1970s, the English public did not scorn him: *This Is Your Life* has featured him twice, a rare tribute.

America also took him to its heart—at first. In 1970 he played an unfaithful husband bewitched by Bo Derek. In *Arthur*, he was an alcoholic millionaire. Suddenly, he was also a sex symbol, and the attention of numberless women seemed due recompense for his childhood.

Like Byron (also club-footed), Moore became an object of sexual fascination. There were three marriages to towering and beautiful women. There were mistresses and co-stars. There were interviews which explained that his problems with women evolved from a childhood fear.

Moore claims to find fidelity impossible and has recently found himself bracketed with the new breed of sexual obsessives, epitomised by Michael Douglas, whose insatiable libido is now seen as a psychological disorder. The streetsmart Dudley Moore of the 1960s might have had something more incisive to say about that than: "We come out of a woman and so we're attracted to women, and women are attracted to us."

Nicole Rothschild's ex-husband was unimpressed with Moore's charms, insisting that "the little rat had bought her with gifts that included two sports cars and a £5,000 breast enlargement operation." "She told me about their sex life," he said. "She said they'd go at it for five days at a time. They would each lose several pounds from the exercise."

As we all know, however, this was just a cry for attention. It was love that Moore craved, not sex.

His present predicament has not come without forewarning. In the recent *Arthur 2: On The Rocks* Moore returned unsuccessfully to an old character, only to portray him in miserable decline. In Britain, the video-release of *Derek And Clive Get The Horn*, intended to recapture his 1960s glory, proved only that his brand of comedy is old hat. The sketch about kissing the wife's head in may be one that Moore now regrets.

GILES COREN



Moore: sad comic genius



Terry Waite is slowly learning to live again, says Julia Llewellyn Smith

Why Waite is still in solitary

Terry Waite lives in a pretty, pink house in a remote Suffolk village, reached along bad, winding roads lined with daffodils. Squat, stone churches mark the way. He lives next door to an old-fashioned butcher's shop, across the road from a country pub. It is the most English of settings, a thousand miles in every sense from the dust of Beirut, the chaos and the squalor that lay outside the series of dark, airless cells where he was chained for nearly five years.

It is also miles away, in atmosphere if not geographically, from the sardine-packed streets of Cambridge, where he has spent the past year as an honorary fellow of Trinity Hall, writing his autobiography *Taken on Trust*, or London, where his family still lives. For a man described as a "super egotist" by a fellow captive, it is a surprising place to start a new life.

It is an apt setting, however, for his next book, which will be about solitude. What aspect of solitude? "I will look at it from various perspectives," he says. Not a satisfactory answer, but then Waite, 54, surely knows his subject. After 1,763 days in captivity, mostly all in solitary confinement.

This is the problem with Terry Waite. So many of his answers are begging for substance, yet how can you not defer to a man whose experiences go beyond yours, who has endured agonies you shudder to imagine?

But the questions remain. Was Waite aware of his role in the arms-for-hostages deals between America and Iran? Does he accept that his work, far from helping to liberate the hostages, may have prolonged their captivity? Does he admit that his imprisonment was largely his own fault, the result of equal doses of self-importance and naivety? Does he see that while we can lionise John McCarthy and Brian Keenan as innocent victims, some people cannot help feeling that Waite—however disproportionate his punishment—was asking for it?

Waite has been asked all this many times, and he is not replying. These are questions for journalists, he says. The general public, who have been transfixed by the hostage story, are the ones who have given him support, and they want to know other things.

"The questions that have touched people are not so much the politics, but the question of survival," he says, opening wide his slightly bloodshot eyes. "You think I wonder how I would have coped under the circumstances? It's like being termi-

nally ill, you don't know until you get there."

Did he know that capture was almost a probability, ever consider how he would cope?

"I didn't dwell on it," he says in his breathy voice, the legacy of the lung infection that dominated those years. "I thought: 'People have lived with it, it can be done.' You always take the possibility of kidnapping into account. You are dealing with highly volatile people. You'd be daft if you didn't realise something will go wrong. You either lose your life or get captured, so it was a calculation I made, one of those things." He laughs. "You accept it."

Like so many of Waite's replies, this appears eminently sensible, but is actually deeply odd. How can you refer to risking years in captivity, and possibly your life, as "a calculation"? Many have remarked on how Waite—almost seemed to welcome his kidnapping. He seems to have been aware of his involvement—in the Iran-Contra affair before his final trip to Beirut. This is a man who admits he is inwardly "a small frightened child, anxious to impress people"; when he faced the imminent collapse of his saintly public image, imprisonment might have come as an escape.

In prison, after all, his heroic status seemed guaranteed by virtue of his situation. How crushing it must have been to emerge to an immediate barrage of criticism, to vicious personal attacks from

Jackie Mann and his cellmate, Tom Sutherland.

Almost anyone would be hurt by such a reception, but Waite dismisses any sensitivity as a legacy of his hostage days. Before then, he implies, he was immune. "What has had the biggest effect on me was being treated as less than a person. You are made vulnerable in a sense, and that vulnerability will be with you throughout life. Being treated as an object brings you up with a jolt. If you are in the public eye, you are treated in a stereotyped form."

Clearly, he is wary of the publicity he once relished. He is charming and helpful to me, asking me all about myself, partly out of interest, partly, I suspect, because he would far rather dwell on my life than discuss his own any more. He humours the photographer, with "Is that so?" and "Well I never," but then turns to me and says guiltily: "I'm increasingly trivial."

So why put himself through it? John McCarthy wouldn't have done it. "No, he probably wouldn't," Waite agrees. "He's probably a lot more sensible than me. But I wouldn't have done this unless Terry [Anderson] had been coming over and I wanted to help publicise his book."

"I understand there are demands. If you write a book about yourself, you put yourself in the public domain. To be constantly subjected to scrutiny is hard for everybody. I had it for a long time, now I just get on with it and do what

I have to do. I'm expecting to be read by people, I'm not complaining."

Plugging a book is one thing. Making a five-minute speech in the rain at RAF Lyneham, as soon as he was released, and before he saw his family, is another. How could he put the public before the personal then? "Well," he says in his clear, northern vowels, "I was advised to meet the press before meeting my family, because emotionally it would be too difficult to speak to someone afterwards. Anyway, I've always had sympathy for a journalist who has a job to do. And first of all there's still the job."

This is dedication far beyond the call of duty, or even acceptability. But it is this obsession with the job that seems always to have driven Waite. It is the result of the "ougoing desire to please, to be accepted" that he speaks of in his book, that makes him put everyone's needs before his family's.

The rot, however, may be setting in. "One of the hidden blessings of my time in captivity is having enough confidence in myself to say I will do what I want to do," he says. "Life is too short to run around doing things I don't particularly want to."

What he wants to do is read and write, and see his four children and his wife, Frances, who come up every weekend. The family, he says, could easily have been shattered by the ordeal, but has instead grown stronger. He is still trying to strike a balance between family, friends and solitude. On his return he could not eat with people, and would sit down for his meal at midnight.

For the moment he has the church next door, "a nice little place, with no jumping up and down", and his faith, which he continues to explore. He sits back in his chair and looks out on the village green, where you almost expect a milkmaid to skip by. "Isn't it perfect here?" he asks. You realise that this is more than a pleasant. More than ever Waite needs to be told that everything will be all right.

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THE TIMES

Meet two of the hostages

Between them, Terry Waite and Terry Anderson spent more than 4,300 days in captivity - mostly in solitary confinement. They will be sharing their experiences at a special *Times/Dillons* forum on Thursday, April 14.

This is a rare opportunity to hear at first hand how two individuals coped with circumstances almost beyond our imagination. Anderson and Waite will talk candidly about their experiences; about what brought them through the ordeal; and about how their lives have been affected.

The audience will be given a chance to ask their own questions. Do they feel bitter? Has anything good come out of their captivity? Would they go to another war-torn state?

The forum, to be chaired by Libby Purves, will take place on Thursday, April 14 at 7.30pm in the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1. Both Anderson and Waite will be signing copies of their books, *Den of Lions* and *Taken on Trust* respectively, after the event.

Readers can obtain tickets (£10; concessions £7.50) by either completing the coupon (right); telephoning Dillons on 071-915 6613; or faxing the coupon on 071-580 7680. Tickets will also be available by calling at Dillons the Bookstore, 82 Gower Street, London WC1, from Monday March 28.

THE TIMES

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When insomnia can kill... how hormone replacement helps to keep women in the best of heart... painful problems with zips



"I've yet to see a death certificate with insomnia written on it. We are going to have to tell some patients that they will have to live with it."

This was the succinct way in which Dr Sue Ruben, clinical director of the North Merseyside Community NHS Drug Dependency Clinic, summed up her views to the magazine *Mims* when discussing the problems of finding suitable treatment for Britain's army of insomniacs.

Insomnia may not be written on death certificates but a cursory glance through any weekly paper reveals accounts of inquests on drivers who, overtired after a sleepless night, have fallen asleep at the wheel. A French study has suggested that up to 80 per cent of drivers in fatal accidents had sleeping problems.

Dr George Beaumont, who has made a study of sleeping disorders, says that accidents caused by falling asleep at the wheel tend to be more serious than other accidents and may account for many

Waking up to deadly peril



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttford

of the 4,500 road deaths a year in Britain.

Insomnia, with the resulting loss of attention next day, also causes accidents at home or at work: it blunts efficiency and increases irritability and depression. About a fifth of British adults say they suffer from insomnia on at least two or three nights a week and 10 per cent feel that they have a sleep problem every night.

Insomnia accounts for nine million consultations every year, and 12.5 million prescriptions for sleeping pills are issued annually. Dr Ruben works with

patients who abuse Temazepam, the most commonly prescribed sleeping pill, but she says she appreciates that some patients do need them from time to time.

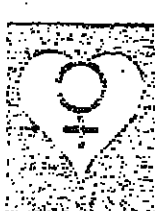
Temazepam misuse has become a serious problem in many parts of Britain, particularly in the north and in parts of industrial Scotland. The pill, a gel-filled capsule, is often taken from the bathroom cupboard of parents or friends, or stolen from a chemist's shop. Dr Ruben said that increasingly the pills are also being sold on the black market.

The gel is melted and diluted with hot water and then injected by the drug abuser. One Merseyside doctor said this week that the habit was so dangerous that he would rather inject himself with Polyfilla. The gel can congregate in the bloodstream, causing gangrene, sudden death or fatal kidney failure.

Temazepam overdosage leads to violent, irresponsible and often criminal behaviour and is frequently used to provide Dutch courage before committing a crime. Dr Brian Mawhinney, the Health Minister, was reticent in Parliament this week about plans to curb its misuse, but it is widely assumed that the Government will introduce stringent controls on its prescription after Easter.

Were it not that other drugs are available as part of the treatment of insomnia, including Zimovane (zopiclone), which is likely to take the place of Temazepam, it would seem indefensible to allow a few thousand delinquents to dictate the treatment of nine million law-abiding citizens. As it is, the NHS will have to bear the difference in cost between Zimovane and Temazepam.

HRT bonus



MYRA Hindley, who is 50, attended out-patients recently for investigation of angina. That women of this age should suffer from

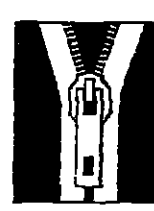
heart disease was a surprise to many people who have not studied the statistics.

During the reproductive years, the female hormones give relative protection to the coronary arteries and heart disease in younger age groups is essentially a male problem. However, from the menopause onwards, the death rate in women from heart attacks becomes similar to that of men. Some studies have even suggested that in post-menopausal women, the risk might be slightly greater than in men. Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), which attempts to redress the hormonal loss which occurs at the menopause, is usually thought of as a means of preventing osteoporosis and resulting fractures and spinal deformities.

It is also seen as a treatment for menopausal symptoms including hot flushes, breathlessness, genital atrophy and depression.

Few women realise that given in the correct dose, HRT can also restore some of the cardiovascular advantages of having a youthful supply of female hormones. As coronary bypass operations tend to be rather less successful in women than in men, and have four times the mortality at the time of operation, it is important that women should keep their coronary arteries as healthy as possible; one means of doing so would be a greater use of HRT.

Ouch!



bleeding ulcers which they claim are the result of injuries caused by their trouser zips. Very

often the patient's story is accepted only out of politeness.

A study from the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh, published in the journal *Injury*, shows that small boys also tend to be careless with their zips. Unfortunately, doctors have been operating on the foreskin in order to release the penis, rather than directing their attention to the zip — an altogether less mutilating procedure.

The Edinburgh research shows that emergency circumcision is unnecessary. In those patients who cannot be disentangled after a local anaesthetic, it is usually found that the flesh has either been caught in the movable part of the zip, or is left behind entrapped by the teeth of the zip after the trouser has been done up.

If caught in the zip's movable part, the underside can be snipped with a pair of bone forceps, and the skin released. A quick general anaesthetic may be necessary. If the patient is caught in the tooth part of the zip, a transverse cut across the zip below the point where the foreskin is trapped allows the zip to fall apart and release its victim.

Scandal of the women left in pain

With so many lives blighted by pelvic inflammation, why is it so difficult to treat, asks Dr James Le Fanu

In this age of heightened health consciousness, it is hard to believe that a chronic illness which can ruin the personal, sexual and working lives of young women may be inadequately treated or even go undiagnosed for years. The disease is called endometriosis, an acute inflammatory condition affecting the pelvic organs: the ovaries, uterus, bladder, colon and small bowel.

The endometrium is the layer of cells lining the uterus which provides shelter and nutrients to the newly fertilised ovum, and which is shed every month at menstruation. From the beginning of the monthly cycle, glands are formed, blood vessels sprout, supporting fibrous tissue is laid down, all under the influence of the female hormones. If fertilisation does not occur, the arteries go into spasm, the endometrial cells die and fall off the wall of the uterus, to be expelled.

In endometriosis, it is believed, some of these discarded cells, rather than passing out with the menstrual flow, reflux back up the Fallopian tubes and spill over into the pelvis. The following month, these displaced cells will be stimulated to proliferate just as if they were lining the womb, and at the end of the cycle they will atrophy and bleed. But the pelvis and the organs within it are not adapted to coping with these aggressive alien endometrial cells, and react as if they had been sprinkled with acid, becoming diffusely inflamed. This is experienced as deep pelvic pain, the jolting of the ovaries and uterus during sexual intercourse becomes exquisitely tender, while involvement of the bowel wall

and bladder can make any call of nature a misery. Despite all this, a survey by the Endometriosis Society this week reports that the average delay in making a diagnosis was 6.8 years, and in a quarter of cases it took ten years.

How this can happen is best illustrated by the experience of Mary Wild, a woman in her late 20s. She first saw a gynaecologist at the age of 18 for severe period pains. He gave the impression she was wasting his time, told her there was "nothing wrong" and advised her to eat more bran. Two years later her general practitioner misdiagnosed her condition as being due to gallstones, and referred her to a surgeon who removed her appendix for suspected appendicitis.

Soon after getting married, she again sought medical advice, this time for the pain she was experiencing during sexual intercourse. This was attributed to "stress" and she ended up seeing a psychiatrist.

By now, she says, her life had become "a seriously unfunny farce". Her husband resented being married to a woman with debilitating symptoms for which, despite repeated consultations, no cause could be found. "I began wondering whether I might be imagining it," she says.

Finally, yet another gynaecologist looked inside her abdomen with a laparoscope and told her she was "riddled with endometriosis", a condition she had never heard of. Her

only chance of a cure, she was told, was a hysterectomy to which she consented "so I could start rebuilding my relationship with my husband. I was desperate to preserve my self-esteem".

Regrettably, her symptoms recurred after the operation and a re-referral to the gynaecologist ended in tears as he told her: "Let's face it, you are one big pain."

This catalogue of medical misfortune is almost a caricature of common prejudices

about gynaecologists — that they can be supercilious, ignorant, prone to making hasty diagnoses and performing unnecessary surgery. Is this fair?

Eric Thomas, professor of gynaecology at Southampton University, says: "There should be no difficulty in diagnosing endometriosis. Although there are

many other causes of pelvic pain with which it may be confused — salpingitis (infection of the Fallopian tubes), irritable bowel syndrome, or dysmenorrhea (painful periods) — if the doctor listens to what the patient is saying, the symptoms alone should tell him what is going on."

The crucial clue lies in the cyclical pattern of the pelvic pain and tenderness on intercourse, which is most marked just before and during the monthly periods when the stimulated endometrial tissue in the pelvis starts to break down and bleed.

But Professor Thomas acknowledges that there are



A laparoscopy, using fiberoptics to look inside the abdomen, is the only reliable confirmation of pelvic inflammation caused by endometriosis

genuine ambiguities. Thus, some women having a laparoscopy for, say, sterilisation will have evidence of widespread endometriosis but no symptoms, while others with debilitating pain may have only a few small patches in the pelvis. Paradoxically, then, symptoms of pain and infertility may be falsely attributed to the disease.

Diagnostic questions aside, endometriosis is also a very difficult condition to treat. Drugs that suppress the female hormones will discourage the proliferation of endometrial cells but at the price of inducing menopausal-type symptoms, causing weight gain and a general

malaise. They are also, in effect, contraceptives, which for those who are finding it difficult to have children anyhow is clearly undesirable.

A hysterectomy may provide the only method of controlling symptoms in extreme cases, but this drastic step is unacceptable for many women, especially as persisting patches of endometriosis may continue to cause pain after the operation.

This is most unsatisfactory and it demands almost heroic insight and understanding on the part of the endometriosis sufferer to realise there is not a ready solution, or that treat-

ment may require sacrificing the natural instincts to have children. But similarly gynaecologists are unable to fulfil the demands to provide a cure. In such circumstances, the role of gynaecologists with a special interest in endometriosis is crucial. They will no more have a magic cure than any of their colleagues but their experience gives them an authority which permits the endometriosis sufferer to trust their judgment. In Britain they are to be found in Southampton, Oxford, Cambridge and at St Charlotte's in London and their names can be obtained through the Endometriosis Society, 35 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8QB.

Climbing stairs: no problem, I've got it taped

Dr Abi Berger on a simple method for easing chronic knee pain

One in four people in Britain suffers from chronic knee problems — most commonly osteoarthritis (OA) of the knee. As a result, thousands, particularly the elderly, are restricted in their day-to-day living. Climbing stairs, getting on and off buses, kneeling and sitting down, frequently prove impossible for these patients.

A cheap, easy-to-use method, without side-effects, of easing the excruciating pain they suffer might seem too good to be true. But this is just what is reported in the latest issue of the *British Medical Journal*.

Janet Cushman, a chartered physiotherapist, and her colleagues at the Rheumatology Unit at Bristol University, took 14 patients with osteoarthritis of the knee and taped up their knee-caps in three different positions. The tape was left on for four days in each position. Almost two thirds of the patients recorded a reduction in knee pain when the tape pulled their knee-cap over towards their other knee. The other two positions tested had no beneficial effect.

Irene Tout is one of those who took part in the Bristol study. Seventeen years ago a traffic accident resulted in injuries to both her knees and neck. Now aged 72, she has



The sticky tape pulls the knee cap into the best position, helping the joint withstand stress

suffered from chronic knee pain for over 12 years as a result of OA setting in. With her knees taped up she found she could walk upstairs and work in the garden without pain. "I could have run up those stairs if I'd wanted to," she said. She also slept better than she had done for years.

OA is characterised by destruction of the cartilage in a joint. When it wears away altogether, bone grinds against bone, which puts ab-

normal stresses on the joint — causing pain. In the knee pain can result if there is poor alignment of the knee-cap as it sits over the thigh bone.

The "sticky tape" technique corrects this. By pulling the knee-cap of the painful knee towards the other knee and strapping it with a piece of tape it is then held in the optimal position to withstand any stresses placed on it. This position also allows

the quadriceps muscle — at the front of the thigh — to work more efficiently. The tape is made of a non-stretch adhesive material developed by Beiersdorf UK and is called "Leukotape P". It is stuck over a lining tape to avoid skin irritation.

Treatments for OA — such as painkillers, physiotherapy, the use of walking aids and surgery — are directed towards relieving the symptoms, but not the underlying

cause. Painkillers, such as Brufen and Voltarol (both members of the "non-steroidal anti-inflammatory" group of drugs), are often poorly tolerated because of their side-effects. These can range from indigestion to stomach ulcers, and kidney problems.

Patients can be taught how to apply the tape themselves. They will be able to look ahead and decide when they will require additional pain relief, and apply the tape in anticipation. Eventually they may become less reliant on medical services and will cope better on their own.

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Janet Daley



Schools should not lead children to discuss sexual activity which they haven't the maturity to understand

Do ten-year-olds need to know about fellaio? Or, as the more committed sex educators would have it, what do ten-year-olds need to know about fellaio? For it cannot be doubted (can it?) that they need to know something. After all, such acts are committed and children are bound to hear about them. It must follow, therefore, that full classroom discussion of the phenomenon is appropriate. Why should parents object when the terms and dilemmas of modern life, to which their children are relentlessly exposed through the media, are aired at school?

The superficial plausibility of this argument makes it peculiarly dangerous. Its conclusion sounds reasonable only if its outrageous premises are accepted without examination — as is so often the case with pernicious ideological positions. For the insane carry-on that has been uncovered at Highfield Primary School in Yorkshire, where pre-pubescent children discussed oral sex and played-acted parental adultery, is not some unilateral bit of lunacy from a head teacher. It is the logical outcome of a very influential educational philosophy which would also advocate — if it were consistent — providing detailed explanations of cumulating or anal intercourse to children of virtually any age. "If they are old enough to ask," goes the refrain, "then they are old enough to need an answer." Which might just be a defensible proposition if it were applied to parents talking to their own children in the privacy and security of home. What it means in a classroom is that the most precociously knowing child from the most irresponsible home can set the pace for a whole-class discussion of every perversion to which unsupervised video-watching has exposed him.

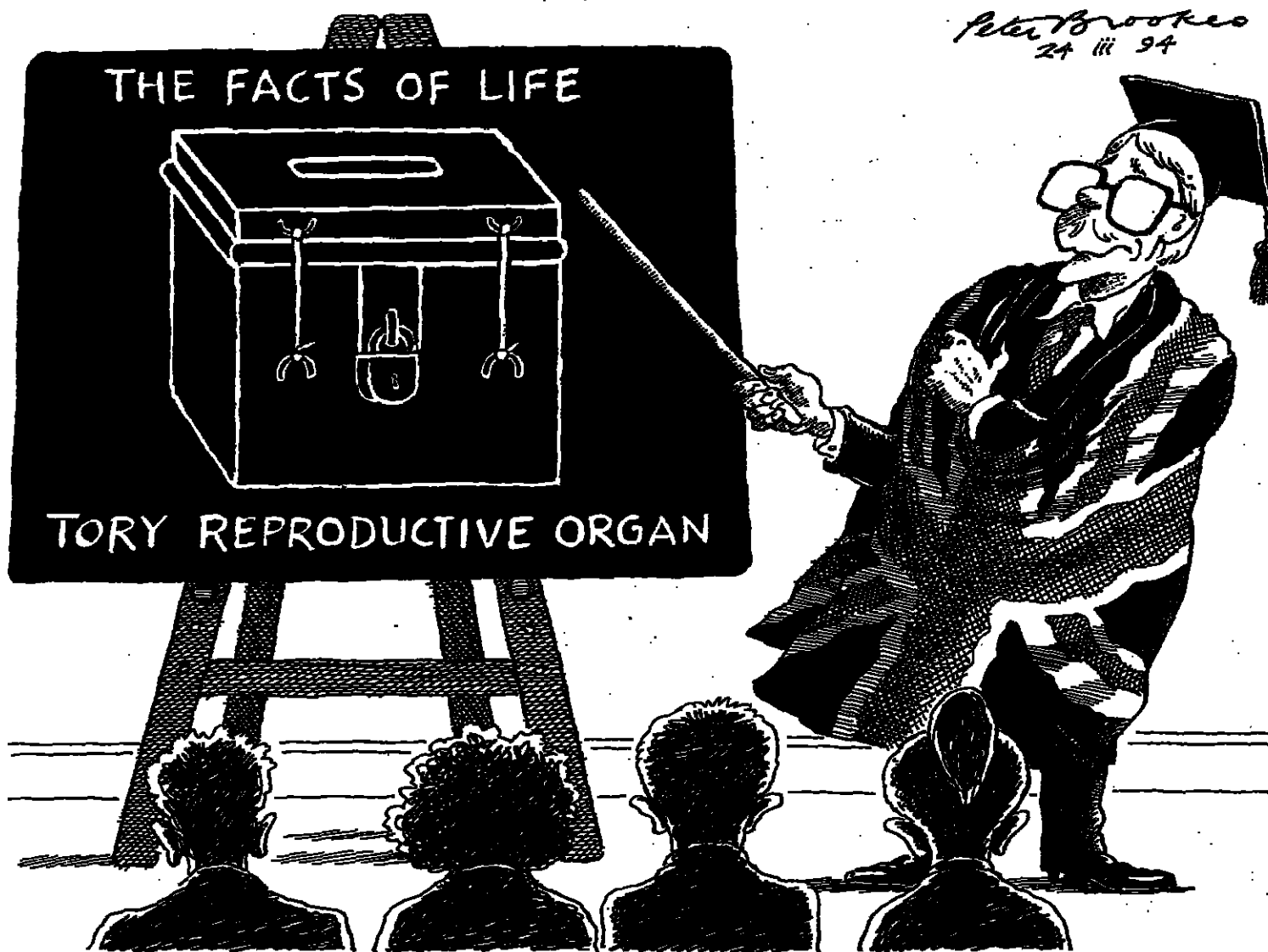
The hard-boiled unshockability of the most preternaturally sexually-aware child will be inflicted on 20 or 30 classmates who might otherwise have been protected by their parents from premature knowledge of what they see as wrong or frightening or, at the very least, insensitive. And since school sex education must subscribe to the prevailing educational dogma, in which all knowledge is value-free, all of these topics (presumably even sadism) must be discussed in a morally neutral way. This last point is one which John Patten is determined to fight, but unless he is prepared to dismantle the entire teaching ethos from which it springs, he does not have a hope.

It would be easier to ban sex education altogether than to persuade the education establishment that it ought to introduce moral

Did nobody suggest that the children were too immature?

By children are not fooled. They realise that they do not know as much as adults. So however fervently teachers insist that they are only facilitators in the child's own learning process — that their grown-up standards are in no way superior to the child's own — children will not believe them. Their vulnerability and need for reassurance are too great.

They will listen to the teacher's suggestion that they act out adultery, and they will know that what is being said is that infidelity is normal and acceptable. They will gather that safety from pregnancy and disease are the only constraints in one's sexual behaviour. They will note that their teacher treats all sexual experience as unobjectionable and inherently interesting, and they will take this as encouragement to experiment. Before they are old enough to understand what sexual desire is, they will have absorbed a comprehensive sexual philosophy as thoroughly as if they had been drilled by a doctrinaire autocrat.



Mysterious way ahead

Every religious experience should strengthen each one of the faiths

There has been a certain ugliness in some recent writing on both sides about the Church of England to Roman Catholicism: some Catholics have taken a view which sounds like the Anglo-Papal propagandists of the early 20th century, and some Anglicans have written as though they were modern ghost writers for Fox's *Book of Martyrs*. Yet the growth of ecumenism will not be denied.

From the point of view of liberal Roman Catholics, the Second World War Pope, Pius XII, is a disquieting figure. He was the last of the Popes before the Second Vatican Council: his views on theology were conservative; he can fairly be criticised for his failure to denounce sufficiently early or strongly the evils of Nazism and the persecution of the Jews. Yet his thinking has in it elements which have stood the test of time. He said that doctors had no obligation to preserve life by abnormal means when death had become the natural course of events. He condemned nuclear war when it becomes "the annihilation, pure and simple, of all human life within the affected area", though that condemnation left open the moral status of nuclear deterrence.

One of his most ecumenical judgments was little noted at the time and has been little remembered since. In 1939, after the outbreak of war, he reversed the decisions of two 18th-century Popes, Clement XI in 1704 and Benedict XIV in 1742, by authorising Christians to take part in ceremonies honouring Confucius and to observe the ancestral rites customary in China. In terms of impact on the Christian mission in China, the harm had long since been done. To quote Ludwig Pastor's *History of the Popes*: "The prohibition of the rites was a decision of incalculable consequences. Things were forbidden to the Chinese Christians which, in their estimation, were demanded by decency and good manners, and on the basis of an interpretation that was at variance with that given by Emperor Kanghi and the Chinese scholars."

The original Jesuit missionaries of the 17th century had believed that China could be converted to a Christianity which was culturally Confucian but theologically orthodox. Their opponents eventually convinced the 18th-century Popes that Confucianism was incompatible with Christianity; they mistakenly thought that Confucius was an atheist. Pope

Benedict condemned the Chinese rites; in 1744 he also prohibited the similar Malabar rites in India. As a result of these decisions, the Roman Catholic mission to China substantially failed, and a fruitful relationship of mutual respect between Western Christianity and the Eastern religions was rejected.

Pope Pius XII is generally regarded as one of the most orthodox of Popes; indeed extreme conservatives look back to him as the last of the truly Tridentine Popes; they regret the reign of his successor, Pope John XXIII and the work of the Second Vatican Council. That lends all the greater authority to his decision to reverse the condemnation of Confucianism. His action in 1939 was followed by a broader definition of the relationship of Christianity to other religions by the Second Vatican Council itself in 1966.

From ancient times down to the present day there is found in various peoples a certain recognition of that hidden power which is present in history and human affairs... The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions... In Hinduism, men probe the mystery of God and express it with a rich fund of myths and a penetrating philosophy. In the various forms of Buddhism, the basic inadequacy of this changing world is recognised and men are taught with confident application how they can achieve a state of complete liberation. The Church also regards with esteem the Muslims who worship the one, subistent, merciful and almighty God... Given the great spiritual heritage common to Christians and Jews, it is the wish of this sacred Council to foster and recommend a mutual knowledge and esteem.

The council did not cease to put the Christian faith as the measure of religious truth, but it did recognise the aspects of truth which are present in all the great religions.

Pope John Paul II, like Pope Pius XII, is generally regarded as a Pope of conservative views, but he has actively followed the Vatican II declaration in his own attitude to other religions, in his visit to Turkey

— an Islamic country — and in the Vatican's belated recognition of the State of Israel.

Undoubtedly, though, there are still many Roman Catholics who have not understood this development of their Church's attitude to other religions. They simply see the other religions of the world as wrong, as the 18th-century Popes saw Confucianism as wrong.

In Britain, the religious ideas of William Blake, though not orthodox either in Catholic or Anglican terms, have had great influence. The admirable spiritual anthology *Colin's Dictionary of Religious and Spiritual Quotations* has Blake's great painting of "The Ancient of Days" on the cover. Its editor, Professor Geoffrey Partridge, quotes Blake's view that

"the Religions of all Nations are derived from each nation's different reception of the poetic genius, which is everywhere called the Spirit of Prophecy". He also quotes from William Temple's *Readings in St John's Gospel*: "There is only one Divine Light and every man in his own measure is enlightened by it."

William Temple did not see all religions as equal; he regarded Jesus Christ as the logos, the ultimate source of all religious truth, but saw religious truth as being present in the great teachers, Isaiah, Plato, Zoroaster, Buddha and Confucius. The influence of other religious traditions is evident in St John's Gospel itself, which combines the revelation of Jesus with the Jewish tradition and with ideas which derive from Plato.

If all the religions have a common element of "recognition of that hidden power which is present in history and human affairs" (the formulation of the Second Vatican Council), then each major religious experience of that power tends to validate the others. Personal religious experience has been worldwide throughout history; that supports the hypothesis that man's religious sense is responding to a reality other than itself. The one

unbelievable proposition is that God is a truth known only to a few people. Some people find the search for the truths of other religions threatening to their own faith, but this is not necessarily so. The Jesuit evangelists in China were confirmed in their faith by what they admired in Confucian doctrine: the greatest Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, inspired the work of theologians such as St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas.

The Dalai Lama has been deeply inspired by Christianity, but is a profounder Buddhist for it. Some of the greatest religious figures, including the Prophet Muhammad, have been most open to prophetic truth as perceived in other traditions. Their own faith was not weakened by their respect for the truths of others.

Yet if we accept this principle, there is a still stronger argument for openness to aspects of Christian truth which are emphasised in Christian Churches other than our own. From the Catholic point of view, the emphasis of the whole Protestant tradition on individual conscience and scripture, or the emphasis of the Quakers on the spirituality of the Holy Spirit, are admirable in themselves. One may feel that other Christian churches underestimate qualities which one would not be willing to sacrifice oneself, but still recognise that they possess their own qualities, which have real validity. Of course this was another doctrine of the Second Vatican Council, which adopted ecumenism towards other Christian Churches as well as openness towards other religions.

Any Roman Catholic believes that the Church of Rome is the "one holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church" of the Creed. Some Anglo-Catholics in each generation since Cardinal Newman have come to share that belief. Such a conviction, once formed, makes it almost inevitable that people should join the Roman Catholic Church.

Roman Catholics themselves would, I think, become Anglicans only if they became convinced by Protestant arguments. They see the evangelical position more clearly than they see the Anglo-Catholic, though that appears to be much closer to their own. At the same time they recognise the virtues and spiritual truths of the Reformation tradition, even if Catholics do regret the division of the Christian world that the Reformation left behind, and cannot share all the beliefs which lead to the Protestant faith.

Mr Clark was to blame

Scott's procedure is cock-eyed, says

Gilbert Gray, QC

Defendant to elderly solicitor: "How shall I give my evidence?" Elderly solicitor to defendant: "Just let it come out as though it were the truth."

Truth is the one quality without which justice may be anything from an old joke to a tragedy or a national scandal. As one of the defence counsel in the Matrix Churchill trial, I thought it a national scandal that Mr Henderson, Mr Abraham and Mr Allen were prosecuted. The reason for their prosecution and acquittal was clear. Is it now becoming clouded at the Scott enquiry?

For some months we have been receiving a series of soundbites from the Scott enquiry, with Scott doing most of the biting. Lord Justice Scott is a formidable fellow who is perhaps fearless to a fault. It's the fault that troubles me. The enquiry's curiously cock-eyed and confrontational procedure produces unkind publicity by the mile. It dilutes where it should distil; it clouds where it should clarify; and the cast of thousands is uncalculated. The safeguards are slender. Today's testifying witness may become tomorrow's condemned man without ever being charged.

Already criticised by some who set it up, it will soon be attacked by others who would tear it down. If the Government does not fall when the report is published, the Opposition will suspect a whitewash, and if Scott becomes a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, they will be sure of it.

It must be borne in mind that the prosecution was brought by Customs and Excise. The Attorney-General has no formal involvement in their cases; more's the pity. Too often, prosecutions by Customs and Excise are characterised by "Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum" tactics. They behave like privateers with planks. The prosecution case was not so conducted by Alan Moses, QC. He was the embodiment of fairness. The prosecution failed, but he succeeded. He sought no victory and suffered no defeat. Neither did the Attorney-General.

Now blame is being heaped upon the Attorney-General; it should not be. He is attacked in respect of the claims to protect certain classes of documents from production by means of public interest immunity certificates signed by ministers. Pursuing the duty to disclose unused material to the defence, in accordance with the Attorney-General's guidelines, the DTI, the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence and the security services were required to search for documents which might be relevant in the widest sense. This was done, and all the departments claimed immunity. The wording of the certificates varied, and that on Mr Heseltine's was drawn to the judge's notice by Mr Moses, who stated plainly that all the ministers took the same view, namely that the judge alone should decide whether the documents were eligible for immunity. Mr Moses had told us beforehand that he would say this, and he did.

The prosecution submitted that it was the duty of ministers to claim immunity for certain classes of documents. Save for some security service documents, Mr Moses never argued that the papers' contents would damage the public interest. It was enough if they fell within a class conventionally eligible for immunity. That was the first question for the judge. He decided that immunity was properly claimed.

The second matter for the judge was to balance the interests of the defence against the ministers' certificates. This he did, with the exception of a few sensitive documents. In favour of the defence, Mr Moses had submitted that if the documents supported the defence or undermined the prosecution, they should be disclosed. All counsel agreed that great weight should be given to the interests of the accused. The judge ruled that all documents, save those concerning national security, should be disclosed. The case continued. Neither ministers nor Attorney-General sought to intervene on this second question.

How this narrative of fairness can be fabricated into an indictment of the Attorney-General, I fail to follow. I never had the impression that he stooped to conquer or tried to gag. The Bar esteems him greatly for his honour and integrity, and so do I. At no time did the trial judge ever suggest that the Attorney-General or Mr Moses could be criticised.

The person to blame for the scandal of the trial is the *actual* man, Alan Clark. If he had not handled the truth carelessly, no prosecution would have been started. He was gratified that British-made weapons were being used in the Iran-Iraq war. He admitted in cross-examination that he had told machine-tool manufacturers that they need not give truthful descriptions in export documents; he added that documents were not relied on in any event. He showed no remorse as he was asked to look at the defendants in the dock at the Old Bailey.

The prosecution was abandoned only because of Mr Clark's conduct. Some of his political detractors say he should have been locked up. I admit he would have been an entertaining cell-mate for somebody. Meanwhile, Mr Henderson, Mr Abraham and Mr Allen await compensation.

Cheers, Norman

THERE is, it seems, no hiding place for Norman Lamont. No sooner has he persuaded the Advertising Standards Authority to ban the infamous television advertisement featuring Lord Healey and a Thresher's off-licence than the heavy hand of the law presents itself.

The heavy pouring hand of the law, that is. For in a move likely to provoke Lamont further, Thresher's has teamed up with the Metropolitan Police to sponsor a reception to be hosted by Commissioner Paul Condon. The party, to which MPs have been invited, will be held at the Institute of Directors next month, as part of the Met's "Counter Action" campaign, aimed at combating retail theft.

"We are not simply providing the booze," says Thresher's. "With our parent company Whitbread, we are sponsoring the whole campaign, which runs for a year." Whitbread chairman and CBI president Sir Michael Angus will be at the launch, as will some heavy-hitters from the business world. But the big question is, will Lamont, Thresher's best known customer, be on the guest list? A police spokeswoman is not to be drawn.

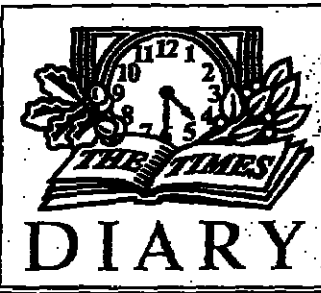
One MP, however, has already made a definite date in his diary: "I will certainly be going along. It sounds most educational," says Labour's Tony Banks. "Thresher might have some advice for the electorate, who have been robbed blind by successive Chancellors. It all sounds very creditable."

● A showbiz future clearly beckons for Bill Clinton. After his co-starring role in the spoof health-care advertisement, the President's musical talents are to be captured on CD. Czech Radio is to issue an 18-minute recording of Clinton playing the saxophone at Prague's Reduta Jazz Club during his European tour in January.

Break the chain

AN UNUSUAL missive is doing the rounds from Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners, the libel lawyers whose mere letterhead is enough to send shivers down Fleet Street spines. But far from upsetting journalists this time, the letter is causing palpitations at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital.

Andrew Stephenson, a senior partner with the firm, has written



to legal adversaries on ten national papers, inviting them to contribute to a chain-letter appeal for the hospital. The hospital, however, while grateful for any help, has had trouble with chain-letters before. "If you can, we would like you to help break this chain," it says.

"I'd normally chuck this sort of thing in the bin, but this seemed to be for a good cause," says Stephenson. "And the addresses were close at hand because I've been in correspondence with all of these people, although I haven't seen any of them in court for a while."

Wooing Ewing

OPERA-GOERS who recall the delicious dancing talents of Maria Ewing, who so memorably removed all seven veils at the Royal Opera House, will be delighted to

hear of her latest plans. For Ewing is to don top-hat, fishnets and high-heels to sing the songs that made Marlene Dietrich famous in the film *The Blue Angel*.

Conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas and accompanied by the LSO, she will take to the stage in a charity gala concert at Drury Lane's Theatre Royal in May. "We expect she'll be pretty outrageous, but whether she'll go quite as far as she did as Salome we're not quite sure." Sounds like we'll all be falling in love again.

Memorabilia

ALTHOUGH England sorely misses the tonic of Brian Johnston in its hour of cricketing need, the great man will be in Barbados for the Fourth Test — in spirit. Johnston's widow, Pauline, sets off today for the West Indies for a holiday, followed by a fortnight's cricket cruise, which the couple had booked before he died.

Johnston was to have entertained guests on the cruise-liner, which docks in Barbados for the five days of the Fourth Test, along with the former England fast-bowler team of Fred Trueman and Brian Statham. Now Pauline will make the trip alone, with Johnston's place in the lecture theatre taken by that lyrical cricketer

Tim Rice. "I shall know a lot of people and they are going to hold 'An Evening with Johnners' in Brian's memory, which is very nice," she said yesterday, passport in hand. "Then we're going to watch the Test."

Chequered career

HIS PAWN, no doubt, suitably repositioned by a five-month break, Nigel Short is steeling himself to return publicly to the chessboard for the first time since losing to Garry Kasparov last year.

Bravely, he has agreed to take on 20 opponents simultaneously in a charity tournament at Simpsons-in-the-Strand, the eating emporium where his army of fans used to

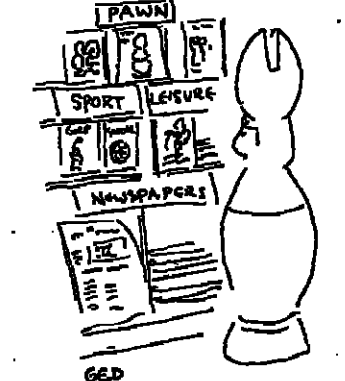
gather to discuss each bruising encounter during the tournament in the Savoy Theatre next door. This time, however, the only thing at stake is how much money Short raises for the Sick Children's Trust.

"It's nice to be back," says Short, breaking off from more cerebral preparations for the Intel Grand Prix tournament in Moscow next month. Defeat, he says, is in the past. "Chess is a sporting contest. You win some and you lose some."

Tavern tone

NEW LIGHT has been shed on the early history of the Lord's Taverners following the recent unveiling of Jack Russell's painting of the Lord's tavern where it was thought the charity was founded. Wrong watering hole, Jack. For it appears that its foundation took place down the road at The George in Great Portland Street, better known to BBC staffers as nearby Broadcasting House as "The Guepote".

"Beer was the main interest, not cricket," says broadcaster and founding member Tony Van den Bergh. "We moved up to Lord's because they opened earlier." But even the appeal of an early pint soon faded. "I resigned when Prince Philip was made 12th man," says Van den Bergh. "It lowered the social tone."





EUROPEAN QUESTIONS

The Prime Minister's outburst was not necessarily a mistake

It is unlikely that John Major enjoyed yesterday's press comment about his strong Euro-sceptical line in the Commons this week. Distinguished columnists argued that his outburst made him look vulnerable rather than strong, that his stance was totally unprincipled, would alienate much of his party, make agreement harder in Europe, give ammunition to the Opposition, and make electoral humiliation for the Tories even more likely in June. All that may be true. Since Mr Major's hold on the Conservative leadership is so tenuous, any one of his shifts and lurches may mark the decisive point at which his grip will falter.

Yet he can also take heart. Almost every point can be argued to the opposite conclusions. Does Mr Major look weak and unprincipled when he promises to stand up for Britain's interests in the Community? Only if he never believed this to be the right course, and has been forced into it by the Euro-sceptics. Yet, ever since Maastricht, both he and his Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, have been saying that Europe now needs to develop in the direction favoured by Britain: decentralised, free-trading, with more members allowed to move at different speeds. This vision is not anti-European; it is merely different from that of, say, Belgium. The federalist goal is not the only pro-European one on offer. Britain's stand on the blocking minority is wholly consistent with its goals for Europe. Mr Major's rhetoric on Tuesday can be judged as sincere and principled.

Will it divide his party? Whatever line he took on this would have done so, since the party is irreconcilable over Europe. But it is surprising how much unanimity this specific issue has uncovered. Almost all the Cabinet is in favour, and all but the most Europhile of backbenchers. Had the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary taken the opposite line, however, there would have been far greater dissent, not just from the professional rebels, but from many MPs who reluctantly supported Maastricht.

The charge that Mr Major has given ammunition to the opposition parties can just as easily be turned around. If anything, they have given ammunition to him. He can

now portray Labour and the Liberal Democrats as reflex federalists, willing to go along with an ideal that strikes ever fewer chords with the voters of Europe, let alone those of Britain. Even France only just managed to vote for ratification of Maastricht, and that country, for historic reasons, has always been keener on a united Europe than has Britain. Mr Major's stance will enable him usefully to differentiate his party from the others; a more difficult task when the argument was simply about Maastricht, which all three supported.

This should help, not hinder, him in June's Euro-elections. Euro-enthusiasts argue that the 1989 "diet of Brussels" campaign contributed to the Conservatives' poor showing. That is difficult to prove or disprove since most people vote in European elections on domestic issues. It might be a mistake to run on a negative, anti-European manifesto, but that is not what either Mr Major or Mr Hurd would want to do. Their message is positive, but it is different, and more complex than the simple one of moving inexorably to a United States of Europe.

The mood has changed dramatically since the last Euro-election. Using a crude measure — support for membership of the EC — MORI found that in 1989 those in favour had a 31-point lead over those who favoured Britain to pull out. By last autumn, this lead had shrunk to a mere seven points. The suggestion that only pro-Europeans turn out to vote has not been tested by pollsters; it could be that only those who feel strongly about Europe will turn out, and that will include sceptics as well.

So this leaves only the claim that Mr Major's rhetoric has harmed Britain's negotiating position. Certainly the view from European capitals yesterday was that it was offensive. But Britain has been no more obstinate on this point than France was on Gatt or Germany on the recognition of Croatia. Even now, France risks holding up the European elections for the naked selfish reason that it wants a huge and unnecessary new parliament building in Strasbourg. Britain is at least fighting a point of genuine principle; and Mr Major's stance deserves respect for that.

PEACE IN OUR TIME

The VE-Day celebrations will be an unpredictable party

The furore over the celebrations to mark D-Day and VE-Day over the next year-and-a-half is a reminder — if one were needed — that Europe, as well as a bureaucratic entity and a would-be single market, is a cauldron of ancient passions. How nations commemorate the most traumatic and joyous moments in their histories is a measure of much else besides their ability to plan a party.

Germany is now distancing itself from the planned celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of D-Day in June. But that leaves Britain with difficult choices to make about next year's events in London half a century after peace was declared in Europe. Under present proposals, German soldiers are likely to join British troops parading through the centre of the city. It remains unclear whether German veterans will also be invited to take part in the festivities. The potential for embarrassment and tension is obvious and should be uppermost in the thoughts of the Whitehall officials planning the parade.

The prospective participation of Germans is not in itself undesirable. The commemoration of D-Day in Normandy will mark a victory in battle of one side over another. In contrast, VE-Day was a moment of liberation which resonated across Europe. By May 1945, Dresden had been bombed, Hitler had killed himself and Axis forces were surrendering all over the Continent. The weariness of the German people with war and Nazism was such that the peace was a welcome release. It seemed that a new era of comparative harmony in Europe might be possible. It is not unreasonable for Germans to take part in an event celebrating that brief

moment of spiritual accord that transcended national boundaries.

Ministers must realise, however, how notoriously unpredictable such commemorative jamborees usually are. The celebrations to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee were expected by many to be a fiasco but turned out a triumph. In contrast, the celebrations to mark the 40th anniversary of D-Day in 1984 were hailed as a festival of European unity but rapidly descended into an embarrassing farce. Even the planners of VE-Day itself could not quite agree on the details. The Western Allies celebrated the peace on May 8, 1945, while the Russians marked the occasion the day after.

Good intentions alone will not insure next year's events against the unexpected. But the Government can take steps to minimise the risk of hostile reaction at home and indignation abroad. First, the event must not be an adversarial overtones; it should bring together not only the Germans and British but the Russian, Americans and Commonwealth countries that fought for the Allies. In such an atmosphere Britons ought to have no reason to feel that those who died in the war have been betrayed.

Second, the 50th anniversary of VE-Day ought to respect the spirit of the event it commemorates. It should essentially be a celebration for civilians. Veterans should, of course, be an important part of it; they must be at the heart of the parade. But it is hard to see the point of soldiers from the modern German army marching through the centre of London. That would be to militarise an event that is meant to celebrate the return of the West from the horrors of war to the possibilities of peace.

SIGNAL TO SCOTT

John Major must build on his reform of security classification

The methods used by Whitehall to classify official information are notoriously out of date. Users of the Public Record Office are often startled to discover a 30-year-old document dealing with a completely innocuous subject marked "Top Secret". For this reason, the changes to the security classification system announced by John Major yesterday should be cautiously welcomed.

Under reforms to be implemented next month, official information will be categorised far more precisely according to strictly defined criteria rather than the vague intuitions of civil servants. Under the old regulations, for example, documents were classified "Secret" if they were considered likely to "cause serious injury to the interests of the nation" and "Confidential" if they might be "damaging to the interests of the nation". With such general guidelines, it is scarcely surprising that nervous bureaucrats erred on the side of caution. The new system is far more specific. Documents will be classified "Secret", for instance, only if they conform to any of five clear criteria — such as likelihood to "damage seriously relations with friendly governments" or "to threaten life directly".

The Prime Minister's argument that the

reform is needed because of the new security threats faced by government is less plausible than his claim that it will save money. This is a laudable goal for change. Though the cost of classification is impossible to quantify, it is an enormously labour-intensive process involving thousands of hours of clerical work as well as executive decisions. Equally, the rapidly changing structure of the Civil Service means that reform is essential. Three quarters of all government work will soon be performed by semi-independent agencies. Their managers will need more detailed guidelines than their mandarin predecessors.

A cynical interpretation would be that Mr Major was also trying to pre-empt the inevitable criticisms of Whitehall secrecy in Lord Justice Scott's report later this year. In practice, yesterday's measures will merely whet the general appetite for broader change. The jury is still out on the Prime Minister's campaign for openness; but its true test will be his proposals for reform of the indiscriminately secretive system of public interest immunity certificates, as exposed by the arms-for-Iraq enquiry. The virus of open government is only now beginning to spread.

Playgroups' role in early schooling

From the President of the Pre-School Playgroups Association and others

Sir, As supporters of the Pre-school Playgroups Association we totally reject your view that "playgroup provision is far less beneficial than structured nursery classes" (leading article, "Not child's play", March 18).

Playgroups are not, and never have been, a substitute for statutory nursery education. Unlike education establishments where professionals take the place of parents, playgroups provide parents with the skills to become educators in their own right. Playgroups also employ trained staff and work to a planned curriculum, which is tailored to the first stages of the national curriculum.

There is no basis for your assertion that playgroups are educationally inferior to schools. Research published in 1987 showed that children who had attended playgroups did as well or better in their later schooling than those who had attended nursery classes. Most studies have concluded that pre-school provision has short and long-term benefits, but these benefits are more likely to be sustained where parents are involved.

Playgroups are also making a vital contribution to the care of children whose parents are working. More than 750,000 children attend them.

The report by the Royal Society of Arts, *Start Right*, published last week (report, March 18), would sweep away the playgroup movement, denying parents freedom of choice about the education of their young children. This must not be allowed to happen.

Yours sincerely,
PAM THAYER,
President,
BRIDGET FLOWDEN,
Vice-President,
P. SOUTHWORTH,
(President, Avon U.K.),
PETER W. ALLEN,
(Deputy Chairman,
Covent & Lydney),
WILLIAM VAN DER EYKEN,
ALBERT OSBORNE,
(Director, Research Support Unit,
University of Bristol),
Pre-school Playgroups Association,
61-63 Kings Cross Road, WC1,
March 21.

Counties that count

From Councillor Hazel Pearson

Sir, Your leading article ("If it ain't broke", March 16) rightly asks what possible reason there can be for ministers to continue with a process and a commission which has generated enormous anger and hostility, both within local government and the general public, and does nothing to generate enthusiasm amongst the Conservative Party's members and natural supporters at grass-roots level.

It is unfortunate, however, that such a well-argued article should be tarnished by repeating the suggestion that Cleveland is among a number of "huge and unpopular new counties" created in 1974.

Cleveland is actually the smallest mainland county in England and according to a MORI opinion survey carried out for the Local Government Commission for England in 1993 is more readily recognised than many so-called "traditional" counties.

Yours faithfully,
HAZEL PEARSON
(Leader, Conservative Group,
Cleveland County Council),
47 Ruskin Avenue, Acklam,
Middlesbrough, Cleveland,
March 16.

From the Leader of Humberside County Council

Sir, When will *The Times* stop perpetuating the myth that Humberside is an unpopular county (leader, March 16)? Only the previous day, in a profile of Brian Gosschalk, head of the local government unit at MORI, you reported a MORI poll taken last month. This found that the number of Humberside people who wanted the county to survive was twice as many as those who agreed with plans to dismantle it.

Let's stop pretending that the local government review is about the wishes and aspirations of local people. Through an all too familiar process of policy drift it has become a matter of "private" discussion within the Conservative Party. The council tax payer has become a mere spectator.

Yours faithfully,
MAGGIE SMITH,
Leader's Office, County Hall,
Beverly, North Humberside,
March 16.

Rapid promotion

From the Rector of Balsham

Sir, Priest to bishop in ten years? (Mr Barton's letter, March 19). St Ambrose of Milan, AD 374. Chosen Bishop even before he was baptised, "in a single week he was successively layman, catechumen [a convert undergoing instruction for baptism], priest and bishop" (see p113, *Byzantium: the Early Centuries*, John Julius Norwich).

Yours faithfully,
W. N. C. GIRARD,
The Rectory,
Balsham, Cambridgeshire.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Sixties buildings in new perspectives

From the President of RIBA

Sir, I suspect that almost all architects will welcome the publication of *Perspectives* magazine as a widening and elaborating of the debate about the forces that shape our environment. It is a shame, however, that your leader of March 15, "Beauty and the Brutalists", was a demonstration of the "style wars" argument in the most simplistic terms. To imply, as it did, that architectural criticism began with the Prince of Wales in 1984 is every bit as unconvincing as the idea that sex began in 1963.

It is also a grave insult to the many who, through community groups and local authorities, campaigned, from the early Sixties onwards, against tower blocks and for decent public housing. It is a particular insult to those architects, such as Sam Webb, who had ensured that no more Roman Points were being built by 1984.

As for your supposition of a "lack of accountability", every architect has to account to a democratically constituted planning committee before he is able to build. Only Crown bodies are exempt from this requirement.

Yours sincerely,
FRANCIS DUFFY, President,
Royal Institute of British Architects,
66 Portland Place, W1.

From Mr Stephen Gardiner

Sir, There are as many if not more serious architects practising in the

1960s and 1970s as in the last 15 years or so: witness the remarkable run of state schools in London, local authority housing for rent in Milton Keynes, and university buildings and hospitals around the country, to name but a few examples.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN GARDINER,
203 King's Road, SW3.

From Mr Roger FitzGerald

Sir, At the age of 35, I belong to the younger generation of architects. Certainly I feel remorse for what the profession to which I belong produced in the 1960s and 1970s: the consequences affect us all the time.

However, I also feel dismayed in the face of your leader. References to monstrous caruncles and terrifying walkways are outdated by a decade. So are references to the "modernist rebellion against classical notions of proportion and human scale".

The Prince of Wales is not just calling for nostalgia or pastiche; nor is he the only person who wants to put the heart and soul back in architecture. The debate now must move on to explore what the ingredients are that produce successful buildings.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER FITZGERALD,
Architects Design Partnership,
Studios 34-36, Kingly Court,
Kingly Street, W1.

Are electricity and cancer linked?

From Dr J. C. Williams, FEng

Sir, Mr Martyn Day's article, "Force behind cancer debate" (Law, March 15), is presented as an objective comment on claims for a link between electro-magnetic fields (EMFs) from power installations and certain types of cancer. The Institution of Electrical Engineers has a clear interest in establishing whether there is any factual basis for the claimed link.

Many of our 130,000 professional members are exposed, during the course of their work, to stronger EMF for longer periods of time than would be the case for most members of the general public.

In 1991 we set up a working party to review continuously all the published available evidence, both epidemiological and laboratory-based. The overall conclusion is that there is no proven evidence for the existence of the effects which have been suggested. If any such effects do exist then their incidence within the population, taken as a whole, must be exceptionally small.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN C. WILLIAMS
(Secretary and Chief Executive),
The Institution of Electrical Engineers,
Savoy Place, WC2.

From the Chief Executive of the Electricity Association

Sir, In discussing the suggestion that EMFs from sources such as electricity meters and substations could cause cancer, Mr Day is wrong to assert that

"the electricity boards seem unprepared to take any action to reduce possible risks until the evidence is greatly strengthened". The government body charged with setting guidelines on EMFs is the National Radiological Protection Board, and the electricity industry follows those guidelines. It is helping to fund the childhood cancer study to which Mr Day refers; it has also had a long-standing commitment to funding biological research into EMFs and works closely with researchers on an international basis.

According to Mr Day, "the Swedes... have decided to accept the link between childhood cancers and strong electro-magnetic fields, unless the contrary is shown". However, the studies to which he refers related solely to overhead lines, not to substations or meters.

The Swedish National Electrical Safety Board stated in February that "it does not believe that an absolutely certain correlation [between living next to power lines and leukaemia] exists. It only makes the assessment that such a correlation is sufficiently probable to warrant consideration and action in the form of further studies".

Current research expenditure into EMFs by UK electricity companies is running at £1.5 million each year.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP DAUBENEY,
Chief Executive,
Electricity Association,
30 Millbank, SW1,
March 17.

Transport of delight

From Dr Peter Burgess

Sir, I am delighted that Oxford is to get the spectacle of Indian bicycle rickshaws, which York and Brighton have already enjoyed over the last year (report and leading article, March 19).

My motivation in popularising rickshaws in York has been to encourage people to regard pedal-powered transport as enhancing to personal and environmental health.

If your readers can't wait until the summer to ride a rickshaw in Oxford they should come to York this Easter, and help a stressed GP to reduce his chances of heart disease in the process.

Yours sincerely,
PETER BURGESS
(Proprietor),
York Cycle Rickshaws,
7 Weddall Close,
Nelson's Lane, York,
March 21.

From Mr Ali Mosawi

Sir, The affluent people of Waikiki in Hawaii would take exception to being called a "Third World country" for allowing the use of bicycle rickshaws in their streets.

Taking a ride on the back of a bicycle rickshaw among the palm trees of Waikiki along the fashionable shops is one of the highlights of visiting the tropical islands.

Taking a similar ride in Oxford to visit Mesopotamia, the Bodleian and the Ashmolean will no doubt enhance the memory of visiting this unique city.

Yours faithfully,
ALI MOSAWI,
2 Manor Wood Gate,
Shipplake, Oxfordshire,
March 21.

From Mr Paul Dunachie

Sir, If Oxford is to introduce a new form of transport to Britain, let us name it correctly at the outset. A pedalled rickshaw is a pedicab. See the *Oxford Dictionary*.

Yours etc,
PAUL DUNACHIE,
1 Campbell Drive,
Bearsden, Glasgow,
March 19.

Type Museum in a London setting

From the Director of the Science Museum and others

Sir, In the next two months Britain has its last chance to establish the Type Museum — a unique museum in London devoted to one of man's greatest inventions, printing from movable type.

The Merriam Monotype Trust, in association with the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Science Museum, has already rescued for the nation a vast quantity of irreplaceable artifacts from the hot-metal business of Monotype, an invention as far-reaching as Gutenberg's in importance.

The Monotype process, patented in 1897, perfected the art of *automatic* type-setting and founding, producing type matrices for virtually every known alphabet and script; printers worldwide came to Monotype for their supplies. The elegance of Monotype's type design and technology made possible the unsurpassed quality of twentieth-century print.

A London site has been found, the purchase of which has to be completed within two months, where the public will be able to see type being created, and a new generation of students and researchers will learn the refinement of skills still needed in the complex world of electronic communication. With public support it can also become the home of a remarkable collection of British *hand* letter foundries stretching back to the sixteenth century.

Recognising the urgent need for the Type Museum in London, complementing the major printing museums in Europe and the USA, we commend the trust's work towards this end and urge your readers to give it financial support.

Yours sincerely,
NEIL COSSONS,
Director, The Science Museum,
PIERS RODGERS
(Secretary, Royal Academy of Arts),
MIRIAM FOOT
(Director of Collections and Preservation, The British Library),
ELIZABETH ESTEVE-COLL
(Director, Victoria & Albert Museum),
JOHN FAIRCLOUGH
(Chairman, The Engineering Council),
JOHN SORRELL
(Chairman, The Design Council),
JAMES ARNOLD-BAKER
(Secretary to the Delegates,
Oxford University Press),
JEAN FAVIER
(President, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris),
c/o The Science Museum,
Exhibition Road, SW7,
March 21.

Traffic 'calming'

From Mrs Clair Bell

Sir, Mr J. Bunting (letter, March 23) puts forward the view that so-called traffic calming measures are not "driver-friendly". They are not intended to be. Their purpose is to be "pedestrian-friendly".

His irritation about driving over bumps in the road is understandable and no doubt shared by many others. But such "hindrances" are a godsend to people in towns and villages who have often fought long and hard to persuade their local highway authority to provide them.

The "damn fool" is not the person who coined the phrase "traffic calming" but the driver who insists on speeding through built-up areas and whose unsocial behaviour is the sole reason for these "unnecessary" bumps in the road.

Yours faithfully,
CLAIR BELL,
Brass Tacks, Biddenden,
Ashford, Kent,
March 23.

Bishops and waste

From Mrs Freda H. Cave

Sir, Mr Julian Francis (letter, March 17) displays a very narrow idea of "spiritual leadership".

The export of toxic waste to the Third World is not a matter for Greenpeace alone. The bishops (letter, March 14) are concerning themselves with the second of the Christian's two great commandments — "love your neighbour as yourself", which entails not doing him harm just as much as working for his good.

Yours faithfully,
FREDA H. CAVE,
86 Summerlands Park Avenue,
Ilminster, Somerset,
March 17.

The purrfect job?

From Mr A. H. Bill Bates

Sir, Changes to *The Times* bring a mixture of delight and sorrow. Ever since the admirable Lynne Truss started to concentrate on television — a job she does well even when I don't agree with her — my four black and white furry friends have missed my reading to them her acute observations of the feline-human symbiosis. Whom will you move to be your moggie correspondent and when?

Yours sincerely,
BILL BATES (and PEPSI, COLA, BOOTSIE and SAM — not really one of us but adopted),
8 Birches Close,
Selsey, West Sussex.

Business letters, page 29

Sports letters, page 43

Relative values

From Mr Jonathan Sell

Sir, I recently received a letter from friends in Los Angeles which concluded: "I survived the riots of '92, I survived the brushfires of '93, I survived the earthquake of '94... I'm not sticking around to see what happens in '95."

They are moving to the relative "safety" of south Florida.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN SELL,
79 Calton Road, Gloucester,
March 21.

[illegible]

of the Service Music will be Messrs. Novello. It is hoped it may be issued before long, so as to be available for choirs who may wish to perform some of the Coronation Music on the day.

● Trophy hunting in Africa ● Cricketer's challenge ● Landmark Trust looks abroad

When tourism is a deadly adventure

By HARVEY ELLIOTT AND
MARIANNE CURPHEY

WEALTHY tourists are paying more than £15,000 to kill protected big game such as leopard and elephant, with the approval of many of the world's leading wildlife conservation groups.

The sport, known as "trophy hunting", resulted last week in the death of the youngest son of Lord Lovat, wartime commando leader and chief of the clan Fraser. The Hon Andrew Fraser, aged 41, was killed by an enraged buffalo which he had shot and wounded. Hunters, including a growing number of Britons, are taken to their prey by guides operating under special government-approved licences throughout much of central and eastern Africa.

Tanzania, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Zambia and Botswana all allow trophy hunting, although Kenya has banned it. About 100 British hunting parties are believed to travel to Africa every year.

Mr Fraser was charged by an injured buffalo while on a 10-day trophy hunting trip near Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. He and his wife were the only clients on the Nairobi-based Robin Hurt Safaris and had a hunting guide and camp staff of ten. The party had earlier killed small game and a leopard.

Mr Alick Roberts, of Robin Hurt Safaris, said from his home in Nairobi that hunters from all over the world came to Africa to shoot game. "We have experienced guides and make every effort to ensure the safety of our clients."

In South Africa, the African National Congress wants local people to buy shares in game parks and support a government-controlled policy of selective culling and conservation.



Vulnerable: in Tanzania a hunter would be charged £1,300 each to kill leopard. Some African countries approve of safaris because the income raised can help local people

Peter Mokaba, chairman of the ANC-led National Tourism Forum, said: "When people are forced off their land to make way for game parks they come to resent tourists. We need to make sure that the benefit and income from tourism trickles down to local people."

The World Wide Fund for Nature does not oppose the hunts because, it claims, local villagers will only tolerate living alongside the game if they can be assured that they will benefit in some way.

"Trophy hunting is very difficult ethically, with strong intellectual

arguments for it and equally strong emotional ones against it," said a WWF spokeswoman. "What is important is that the money raised through hunting is ploughed back into conservation and the local community. It is very difficult for African people living among the animals to put up with them attacking crops and cattle unless they can see something in return."

Some conservationists argue that trophy hunting can be preferable to mass tourism. A single truck carrying one hunter which may eventually kill one leopard is better than the

noise and pollution of dozens of tourist coaches, they claim. The British Association for Shooting and Conservation says the "wise use" policy, as it is known, means tourists pay large amounts of money to shoot surplus animals and maintain the ecological balance.

Big game hunting is a sport very few can afford to pursue. Over the past five years German and American tourists have outnumbered the British on African safaris hoping to bag the "Big Five" — elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard. All are vulnerable species and it is

difficult to obtain hunting permits for rhino. In Tanzania, a permit to shoot an elephant is available and costs £2,600; a lion or a leopard costs £1,300. Some tour operators and animal pressure groups, including the Born Free Foundation charity, suggest the practice "smacks of neo-colonialism".

Will Travers, the charity's director, said: "Personally I find the practice incomprehensible and repugnant and I would always promote a non-consumptive policy. However, I would not wish to dictate to the governments of coun-

tries involved how they should use their wildlife resources." A number of wildlife charities privately fear that little of the money from hunting trips and permits goes directly back to the local community or into conservation.

The brochure of Tallgrass Safaris, whose hunts in Tanzania cost from \$1,250 (£800) per day for two clients, has no qualms. "Baiting for the big cats is one of the most exciting parts of a good safari," it says. "The haunch of a buffalo or zebra hung in a tree at the proper height will almost always produce a lion."

Viv in the crease

By NIGEL WILLIAMSON

VIV Richards, one of the greatest of all batsmen, has taken up a career in tourism on his native island of Antigua. The former West Indian captain, who retired from first-class cricket last year, is spearheading plans by the Caribbean island to upgrade its range of sporting facilities for holidaymakers. He has been employed by Clubs International, a leading property group on the island.

His appointment comes, appropriately, as the island prepares to play host to thousands of English cricket supporters due in Antigua next month, when the island stages the fifth test match.

Clubs International, which runs Club Antigua and the Half Moon Bay Club on the island, has pioneered the "all inclusive" concept where, in



Viv Richards: challenge

addition to food, drink and other entertainment, sports facilities with tuition are offered as part of the basic package price. Mr Richards says: "Cricket has been my life but I want to try something different. A new challenge is important to me." He will advise on how existing facilities can be expanded and will study the sporting requirements of guests in Antigua and in the group's properties in St Lucia and Barbados.

Richards, who played for Somerset and Glamorgan in the county championship, is also working on plans to set up a cricket coaching academy which would coach boys from all around the world. Richards said: "It would be particularly satisfying to play a role in helping find fresh black cricketing talent in the townships of South Africa."

Book a place in living history

By JOHN YOUNG

MORE than 150 holiday homes in Britain, three in Italy, one in America and two in the Channel Islands, are featured in the new edition of the Landmark Handbook, published by the Landmark Trust. They include castles and cottages, gatehouses and

garden follies, parsonages, schoolhouses, a lighthouse and a prison.

Among the most recently restored properties are the Villa Saraceno, in Vicenza, Italy, which sleeps 16 and

receives its first visitors this week, and Knowle Hill, a cottage near Ticknall, Derbyshire, which opens for the first time at Easter. But the one certain to attract enormous interest is the Casa Guidi, the

former home of Robert and Elizabeth Browning in Florence, which is now owned by Eton College and leased to the trust and which opens later this year.

As distinct from most travel brochures, the handbook reflects the primary concern of the trust, which was established some 30 years ago to rescue and care for beautiful and historic buildings threatened by neglect and decay.

Each of the entries contains a brief history of the building, accompanied by photographs, floor plans and location maps showing nearby places of interest.

In a foreword Sir John Smith, the trust's founder, says the best solution for such buildings is often to let them for holidays. There is seldom a suitable public use, and to turn them into permanent homes may demand alterations and additions which would spoil them.

"The handbook, and an accompanying price list, can be obtained from the Landmark Trust, Shoteshbrooke, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 3SW (0628 825252). Price £8.

High-tech hostelling around the world

By FREDDIE LAUBERG

THE International Youth Hostel Federation has introduced a new computerised booking network to help hostellers plan their accommodation at more than 200 locations around the world more cheaply and quickly.

At the same time new international hostelling guides have been launched, listing more than 5,000 places to sleep in comfort and safety around the world from as little as £4 a night. One guide covers Europe

and the Mediterranean; the other, Africa, America, Asia and Oceania, providing details of town, country and beach and lake locations, the prices and the facilities available, plus directions, reservation and payment methods and information on each country.

The German YHA, for example, offers accommodation in 50 castles throughout the country at prices ranging from 11 to 18 DM

(£4.72 to £7.72) a night. The computerised booking system, on 071-836 1036, features hostels in most big cities. The technology enables hostellers to make reservations worldwide up to six months in advance and secure their accommodation, using a credit card if they prefer. Clients pay in the currency of the country they are in when they make the reservation and they receive an immediate printed confirmation.

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● Profitable niche for low-flyers ● France with fears ● Free entry to Stonehenge

The flying minnows find secret of success

By DAVID HEWSON

AS BIG international carriers fight over access to Heathrow and other big airports, business is booming for a new generation of small, independent carriers working from regional locations.

Thanks to European harmonisation, airlines no longer need to gain prior approval from the Civil Aviation Authority of scheduled routes in Europe. All they need is an Air Operator's Certificate from the CAA, the planes, the financial resources and enough space in air schedules to fit in their flights.

Deregulation has led to scores of new local services, often in planes usually associated with business-executive flights or leisure trips by wealthy private flyers. Typical of the new scheduled carriers is Love Air, which operates twice-daily flights between Biggin Hill and the northern France resort of Le

Touquet using eight-seat Piper Chieftain aircraft.

Return fares for the 40-minute flight cost from £97; hotel breaks start at £132 a person for a one-night stay, with supplements for golf and accommodation at the Château de Montreuil, inland from the resort. As a small independent, Love Air can change its daily schedules as it pleases, putting on smaller aircraft, if capacity falls.

Like many of today's new local airlines, the organisation has its roots in flying clubs. Its parent company, the London Flight Centre, has been running flight-training schools in Kent for more than a decade. It has expanded into air-taxi work based at Biggin Hill and Stansted. Common small charter planes such as the Piper Chieftain are proving to be the backbone of many small airline operations.

Love Air is unusual among



Deregulation has led to many new local services, such as that flown by Captain Mike Sargent in this eight-seat Piper Chieftain

today's flying minnows in that its clientele is composed mainly of leisure travellers looking for an easy break from London. Most companies serve business travellers trying to save time by using the facilities of small, convenient airports.

ATS Vulcan, which began work as an air-taxi operator almost 30 years ago, will soon operate seven regular scheduled services from Southampton, serving Dublin, Aberdeen and Liverpool, and in northern France, Caen and

Cherbourg. The company started operations using Chieftains but, because of demand, has introduced 18-seat turbo-prop Embraer Bandeirante aircraft.

During the summer, the company will make a rare venture into the leisure market with regular day trips to mark the 50th anniversary of D-Day. For £99 on Saturdays and £119 on weekdays, customers will be flown from Southampton to Cherbourg, then given a coach tour of local sights, and lunch in

Bayeux, before flying home from Caen.

Terry Stacey, Vulcan's marketing manager, thinks, however, that the company's future will continue to lie with commercial traffic. He says: "Most of our passengers are people travelling on business who want to get their work done in a single day, then get home without incurring the expense of overnight hotels."

Vulcan tries to dovetail its operations into those of the big airlines. Its planned Southampton-Dublin service will

connect with Aer Lingus flights to New York, and movements at Liverpool and Aberdeen are designed to offer good connections with Scandinavian and Scotland.

Yet the revival of the small airline business has not been without its casualties. Yorkshire European, a rapidly expanding northern operator based at Leeds-Bradford airport, failed after only six months; another, Lakeside North West, which operated out of Carlisle also failed after a few months in the air.

French come down hard on errant motorists

By TONY ROCCA

SWINGING new fines for motoring offences have come into force in France with the introduction of a new penal code, just as ferry companies

are wooing British drivers to take their cars abroad.

Courts have been granted wide powers to impose penalties that in some cases have more than doubled, to a maximum of £350 for having badly

adjusted headlights, for instance, and £116 for not wearing a seatbelt. Anyone causing death by driving faces three years' jail (up from two years) plus a £35,000 fine (up from £3,500).

Most controversial of all is a new clause which gives police and magistrates the right to levy a supplemental charge of dangerous driving when a motorist is deemed to have "deliberately put the lives of others in danger". This can be applied whether or not there has been an accident and carries a fine of up to £1,160 and a year's imprisonment — and that's in addition to whatever penalty may be imposed for other contraventions.

French motoring organisations have protested that



this puts the driver entirely in the hands of the judge or arresting officer, whose arbitrary decision is final and can be taken without the need to call any witnesses.

The highway code change has been prompted by France's decision to replace its 183-year-old penal Napoleonic Code with a new

criminal code covering five categories of misdemeanour — from £25 for a minor parking infringement, to £140 for a defect in the car, to £270 for speeding offences.

For visiting drivers, the revision could not have come at a worse time, on the eve of the Easter holiday period and approaching the opening of the Channel tunnel.

By pleading guilty and paying on the spot for minor infringements, motorists can avoid the court and may even qualify for a "discount" on their fine.

A transport ministry official in Paris says the system of reduced payments for on-the-spot fines still applies, and

that foreigners in effect have to comply by paying in cash. Even people with French bank accounts have their cheques cards refused; nor are credit cards or travellers' cheques accepted (though this may be under revision). A refusal risks impounding of the driver's car.

Fixed-price tariffs have not changed. The difference comes if the contravention is so important as to require automatically the accused to appear in court — as in the case of a manslaughter charge, for example, or not stopping after an accident (maximum penalty now two years' jail and £2,250 fine, up from £3,500).

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BARONESS Thatcher has become one of the 15 million visitors to developing countries who each year suffer health problems, according to Michael Farthing, Professor of Gastroenterology and honorary consultant physician at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London.

Her collapse on Monday is a common experience for western travellers, he says. The most common methods of infection are via contaminated food or water.

Stansted services

SEVEN new scheduled destinations — Munich, Copenhagen, Belfast, Teeside, Bern, Antalya and Izmir, both in Turkey — have been added to London Stansted airport's growing list this summer.

Cut-price Poland

LOT Polish Airlines, which this month began flying to Warsaw after a dispute with BA had grounded all flights between the two countries, is offering promotional fares to rekindle the market. Return fares for outbound flights before March 31, start from £150 instead of £225. A return business class fare has been reduced from £449 to £370.

Travel News is edited by Harvey Elliot

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THAILAND

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NEWS

Lyell demands CPS improvements

The Attorney-General demanded improvements in the standards of criminal prosecutions to ensure that justice was "less of a game and more a search after truth." Sir Nicholas Lyell spoke just after a widow complained that the drunken driver who killed her husband had been brought to justice because she forced the hand of the Crown Prosecution Service.

Alison Burgess said that the driver was charged with causing death by dangerous driving only after she had spent £15,000 launching a private prosecution. Page 1

German veterans banned from VE-Day

Veterans of Hitler's armies will not take part in the 50th anniversary of VE-Day but ex-servicemen are divided over the Prime Minister's plan to have serving members of the German armed forces march past the Cenotaph May 7, 1995. Page 1

Euro-battle

John Major is to step up the political battle over Europe with a promise to defend British interests against the centralising ambitions of Labour and the Liberal Democrats. Pages 1, 9, 15

Security shakeup

A comprehensive shakeup of Whitehall security, designed to reflect the end of the Cold War and the increasing threat from terrorism and espionage, was unveiled by John Major. Page 1

Moral crusade

John Patten said he wanted morality at the heart of sex education after ordering an investigation into a primary school where pupils of 10 discussed oral sex. Page 2

£100m bank fraud

A merchant banker was jailed for six years at the Old Bailey for a £100 million banking fraud. The case is thought to be the most serious of its kind to come before a British court. Page 3

Siberian crash

Rescue teams were battling ever weather and inaccessible terrain to reach a remote site in the Siberian Taiga where an Aeroflot Airbus crashed, killing all 75 people on board. Page 4

NSPCC warning

Abuse and neglect of children is increasing despite legislation and changes in child protection procedures, said the NSPCC. Page 7

Somerset pigeon flies to Peking

A racing pigeon which failed to find its way home to Somerset from the south of France has turned up two years later in Peking, after a journey covering two continents. William Pope, of Watchet feared he would never see his bird again. He was astonished to get a letter from a Chinese pigeon fancier reporting the bird in good health. Page 1

Chewing it over

Poor quality and "quick-fix" specialist NHS dental work has prompted an enquiry by the Dental Practices Board into treatment standards. Page 8

Centre stage

The biggest political beauty contest of John Major's troubled Government takes the stage in Plymouth when he, Michael Heseltine, and Kenneth Clarke all address the Conservative Central Council meeting. Page 9

Unity bridge

In symbolically important step to lasting peace in Sarajevo the bridge linking the Serb district of Grbavica with the centre was opened for the first time in nearly two years. Page 14

Swedish timetable

Sweden's constitution is the consideration behind the timetable for European Union enlargement. Entry has to be approved by two parliaments. Page 15

Ciskei crisis

President de Klerk said that the situation in Ciskei was "very volatile" and its former ruler refused to address rebels. Page 11

China rejection

Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, is struggling to prevent the collapse of the Clinton China policy in the wake of Peking's blunt rejection of human rights demands. Page 10



Robosaurus, billed as a "car-nivorous monster", eats a car during a preview of the Easter agricultural show in Sydney

Telecoms: Mercury Communications is calling for an immediate end to the ban on British Telecom broadcasting video-by-phone, provided rivals are given more flexible access to the BT network in return. Page 25

Golf: The Players' Championship begins in Jacksonville, Florida today with seven Europeans among a field of 144 chasing a first prize of £300,000. Page 42

Football: "It seems the price Eric Cantona pays for his moments of inspiration is intermittent possession by the devil," Simon Barnes reports on the game's flawed genius. Page 46

Rowing: Serious back injuries among Britain's leading rowers has thrown into question the use of big blade oars—the type to be used by both crews in the Boat Race this weekend. Page 42

Freedom trauma: For a man described as a "super egotist", how has Terry Waite adapted? Page 16

Insomniacs: Are they suitable cases for treatment? Page 17

Big game question: Can hunting trips be justified? Page 22

Scrutiny: Oliver Letwin reviews Roger Scruton's *Modern Philosophy*; Peter Ackroyd on Baudelaire. Pages 40, 41

Sequels all round: New films this week may induce a feeling of déjà vu: Whoopi Goldberg again dons her wimple for *Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit*. And *Beethoven's 2nd* is a sequel to the family box-office hit about a lovable dog. Page 37

Aussies on tap: The hit Australian musical *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, which opened in London on Tuesday, turns out to be a riotous celebration of tap dance. Page 39

Schnittke honoured: Russia's leading composer, Alfred Schnittke, is the subject of a Royal Academy of Music festival when 22 of his works will be performed. Page 38

THE TIMES TOMORROW

Free theatre for a year

A chance to win free theatre tickets to top West End shows for a year if you help decide *The Times Readers' Award* to the best theatrical performer of the year

The wages of sin

Should "Mad Frankie" and "Taters" have benefited financially from recounting their gangland crimes on television? Lynne Truss investigates

Electronic Hollywood

Infotech investigates the revolutionary electronic method of distributing films worldwide directly from Hollywood

The chauvinist captain of a village cricket team finally snaps his fingers at his mousy wife. Then the mouse becomes a lion. *Outside Edge* (ITV, 8.30pm).....Page 47

European questions

Britain's stand on the blocking minority is wholly consistent with its goals for Europe.....Page 19

Peace in our time

The 50th anniversary of VE-Day ought to respect the spirit of the event it commemorates. It should be essentially a celebration for civilians.....Page 19

Signal to Scott

A cynical interpretation of the reform of security classification would be that the Prime Minister was trying to pre-empt the inevitable criticisms of Whitehall secrecy in Lord Justice Scott's report later this year.....Page 19

JANET DALEY

For 30 years, teaching has been dominated by the doctrines, on the one hand, that knowledge can be useful to children only if it is made personally relevant, and on the other, that knowledge must be free of personal judgments.....Page 18

GILBERT GRAY, QC

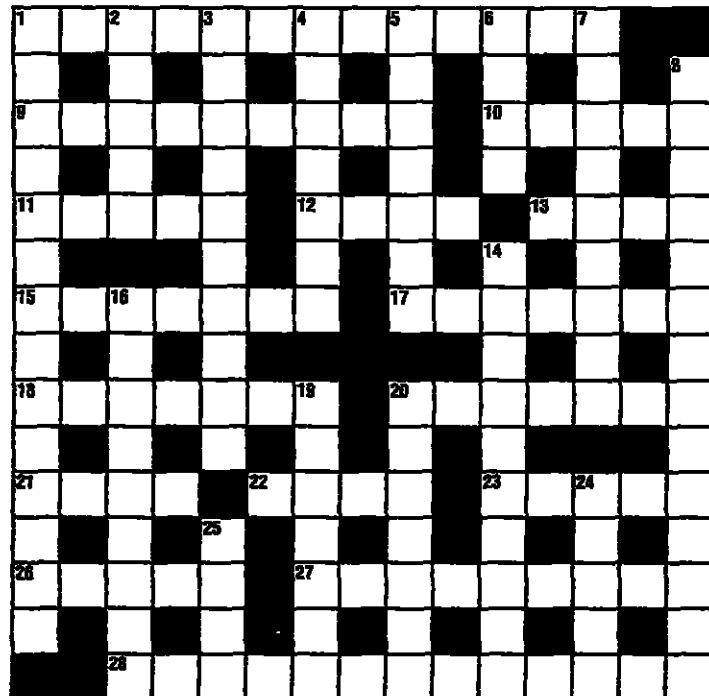
For some months we have been receiving a series of soundbites from the Scott enquiry, with Scott doing most of the biting.....Page 18

Mr Alvaro del Portillo, head of Opus Dei; **David Ginsburg**, Labour and then SDP MP; **The Ven E. E. Maples Earle**, Archbishop of Tonbridge, 1953-76; **Giulietta Masina**, actress; **Charles Redstone**, head of Sobranie.....Page 21

Deadline approaches for a Type Museum in London.....Page 19

The American press has plucked the finances of Arkansas and the Clintons. However the respectable press has shown little-to-no appetite for publishing anything about sex and violence. Arkansas seems to be a congenitally violent place, full of colourful characters with stories to tell, axes to grind and secrets of their own to protect. — *Wall Street Journal*

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,498



ACROSS

- Looks at notes and comes to terms with unpleasantness (5,3,5).
- Domestic apparatus set with small weight on end (9).
- Spirit supplied with lamp (5).
- An insect's left inside power (5).
- Lady in love is past 50 (4).
- Factory economist from Scotland (4).
- Be virtuous protecting western tree (7).
- Missus provides cake ingredient (7).
- Creature given work, very large amount (7).
- Page about nurse's claim (7).
- Contract, when announced, may make you scratch your head (4).
- Cleaner piece of furniture I mustn't rest in (4).

DOWN

- Razor-shell in Channel water ending lost (5).
- Spicy drink helps give one gusto (5).
- Sausage, potato and egg served to the foreign army (9).
- Man bagging river bird ending in chef's dish (5,3).
- In favour of part of hospital appearing progressive (7-7).
- Military unit of engineers led by founder (5).
- A place for stockings — and outer shoes possibly (10).
- Thrown and injured, then taken in hand (7).
- Notes about Irish autobiography (7).
- Pudding? One would get seconds in the past (4).
- One put up Frank, a trouble-maker (9).
- Able somehow to come down and destroy everything with ultimate justification (2-3,3-3).
- Mountain equipment from Nepal shifting farm animals (10).
- Soccer player in team becoming more mature (7,2).
- Indian complaint — internal spasmodic sound (7).
- Wine firm spanning one entrance to colonnade (7).
- P-priest is 'the cloth' (5).
- Old donkey climbing mountain (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 19,497

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For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0891 500 followed by the appropriate code.

Region	Forecast
Greater London	701
Kent, Surrey, Sussex	702
Devon & Cornwall	703
Wilt, Gloucestershire, Somerset	704
Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire	705
Northamptonshire, Leicestershire	706
Lincolnshire, East Angles	707
North Yorkshire, Cumbria	708
West Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire	709
Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire	710
Central Midlands	711
East Midlands	712
Lincolnshire, Humberside	713
Derbyshire, Staffordshire	714
Gloucestershire, Wiltshire	715
Wiltshire, Dorset & Devon	716
Wiltshire, Dorset & Devon	717
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Wiltshire, Dorset & Devon	729
Wiltshire, Dorset & Devon	730

For the latest AA traffic and road-works information, 24 hours a day, dial 0366 401 followed by the appropriate code.

Region	Forecast
London & SE traffic, roadworks	731
East of London	732
West of London	733
North of London	734
South of London	735
West of London	736
North of London	737
South of London	738
West of London	739
North of London	740
South of London	741
West of London	742
North of London	743
South of London	744
West of London	745
North of London	746
South of London	747
West of London	748
North of London	749
South of London	750

Yesterday's highest day temp: Farnley, South Yorkshire, 10C (50F); lowest day temp: Loch Lomond, Scotland, 1C (34F); highest night temp: Lough Linn, Scotland, 4C (39F).

General: Much of England and Wales will be dry and fairly sunny, with scattered showers affecting western coastal areas. During the evening thicker cloud will spread into South Wales and southwest England, bringing rain by midnight. Sunny intervals and blustery showers are expected over Scotland and Northern Ireland throughout the day, heaviest and most frequent over north and northwest Scotland. It will be generally windy with gusts affecting many northern areas, but the winds will moderate during the day.

London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands: Mainly dry with sunny periods. Wind west to southwest, fresh, locally strong. Max 11C (52F).

Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales: Dry with sunny intervals, rain later. Wind west to southwest, fresh, locally strong. Max 11C (52F).

N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man: Sunny intervals, scattered showers. Wind west, strong. Max 9C (48F).

Central N, NE England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth: Sunny intervals and scattered showers. Wind west, strong, locally gale. Max 8C (46F).

SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll, N Ireland: Sunny intervals and blustery showers. Wind west, strong, locally gale. Max 7C (45F).

Central Highlands, NE Scotland, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: Frequent blustery showers, snow over mountains. Wind west, strong to gale. Max 5C (41F).

Outlook: Rain crossing southern Britain during Friday and returning from the southwest late on Saturday.

Low T will remain off the northeast coast of Norway and fill. Low V will run quickly across southern Britain into Europe. Low W will run northeast towards Iceland.

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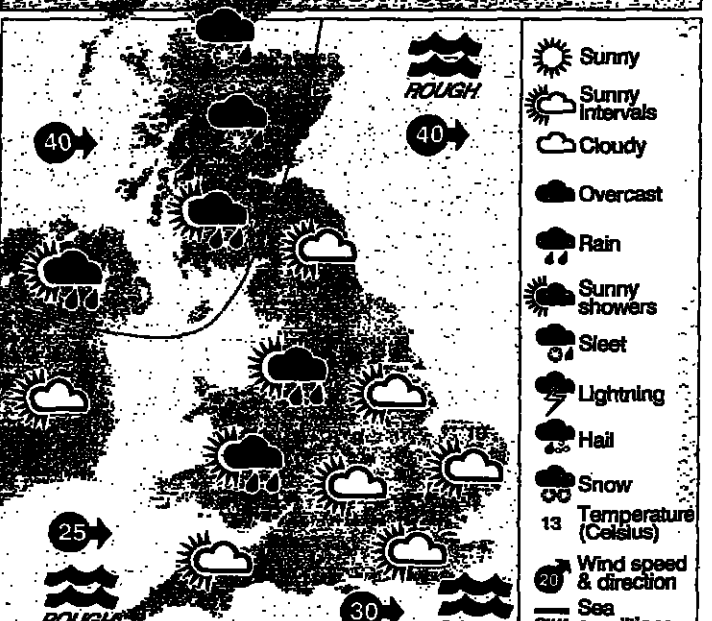
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NOON TODAY



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ANATOLE KALETSKY 29

Don't worry about inflation... until 1996



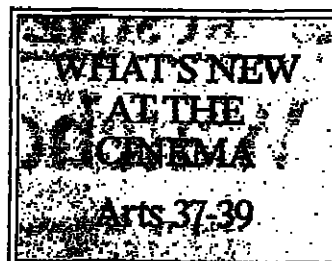
BOOKS 40, 41

Roger Scruton: an apologia for philosophy



SPORT 42-48

Check your progress in the 1st XI game



THE TIMES

THURSDAY MARCH 24 1994

Markets slump as inflation news hits interest-rate hope

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S headline inflation rate fell to 2.4 per cent in February, from 2.5 per cent in January, while underlying inflation, targeted by the Government, stayed at 2.8 per cent. The initial reaction of bond and share prices, which have traded higher in recent months on any data suggesting that another interest-rate cut is in the offing, was one of disappointment. The consensus of

City forecasts had looked for headline retail price inflation to fall to 2.3 per cent and for underlying inflation to decline to 2.6 per cent.

The FT-SE 100 share index closed 46.2 lower, at 3,155.3, and gilts were quoted as much as a point lower. These declines came in spite of a positive performance in the US after the Federal Reserve's signal of further tightening in monetary policy and also in spite of a slightly larger than expected 8 basis points cut in the German repurchase rate.

sterling, however, rose to finish at 80.6 on its trade-weighted index, from 80.3 on Tuesday.

The annual rate of headline inflation would have fallen further last month but for a strong rebound in high street goods such as clothing and footwear, after unusually deep discounting in the January sales, which contributed to a 0.6 per cent rise in February retail prices. There were increases in the prices of some household goods, second-hand cars and some food. However, a petrol

price rise last February dropped out of annual comparisons, letting the 12-month rate fall.

Clothing and footwear prices jumped by 2.7 per cent in February, the biggest February rise since 1992. Office noted that January's fall in the same category was the biggest for any month since 1921, putting February's rise in perspective.

It is clear that consumers are continuing to play cat and mouse with retailers who are trying to

rebuild profit margins after a long recession with very weak consumer demand, followed by a recovery in which consumers remain extremely price conscious.

In past months, there has been very clear correlation between price movements and sales volumes. In January, when the headline RPI fell by 0.4 per cent, sales rose by 0.9 per cent. In February, when prices in the high street rose by 0.6 per cent, retail sales fell by 0.5 per cent.

The pattern of recent months suggests that shops may have to cut prices again in March to sustain retail spending. Richard Brown, deputy director general of the British Chambers of Commerce, said: "Today's figures provide further convincing evidence that inflation remains under control. Unfortunately, they also underline the difficulties faced by businessmen to increase profitability in the face of sluggish demand."

Stock market, page 28

Young backs BT for video by phone

By ROSS TIEMAN

MERCURY Communications is calling for an immediate end to the ban on British Telecom broadcasting video-by-phone, provided rivals are given more flexible access to the BT network in return.

The proposal challenges the Government's policy of restraining BT while encouraging cable television companies to build the "information superhighways" of the future.

Abandoning earlier support for the ban, Lord Young, Mercury's chairman, said technology was advancing so fast that Britain's telecoms regulatory regime needed an overhaul. "We would be in favour of the restriction being lifted," he told a parliamentary enquiry, "provided that we all have economic access at the right rate" to BT's wires.

Dozens of rival suppliers of entertainment and information services could then compete over a single network.

Lord Young, the former trade secretary, says technology is moving so quickly that telecoms regulations need overhauling. Mercury wants access to the BT network

providing BT with the revenue necessary to increase the capacity of its network, using fibre-optics where necessary.

However, in evidence to the cross-party trade and industry select committee, Lord Young said technical advances meant that existing wires could carry far more information than previously thought. Optical fibre links to homes might never be necessary. It might also prove possible to offer households many services, including video-on-demand, more cheaply using transmitters at local telephone exchanges.

Freed from restrictions, competitive markets would enable suppliers to choose appropriate technology to offer the services required at the

lowest cost, he said.

Besides challenging the regulatory regime, his evidence called into question the wisdom of the cable companies' £2.7 billion investment in laying a new web of wires to offer television and telephone services to homes in Britain's cities. The companies plan to invest £10 billion by 2000.

Ministers have so far resisted pleas for the restriction on BT to be lifted, knowing that this would wreck plans by several cable companies, which are largely owned by American and Canadian parents, to float their British subsidiaries.

Alan Bates, chairman of the Cable Television Association, told MPs that a lifting of the ban on BT "would concern very much our investors". He added: "If the regulations were changed now, we would kill at birth this industry that is moving so swiftly forward."

In a drive to develop competition in telecoms services, Britain became the only country in the world to allow cable television companies to offer telephone services too. BT was banned from competing, though that is to be reviewed in 1998.

The cable operators told MPs that their ability to offer cheaper telephone services was reflected in their success in winning customers. They had 300,000 telephone customers and charges were typically 15 to 20 per cent lower than BT's.

But BT and Ofcom, the telecommunications regulator, have become the focus of Mercury's fight to force down BT's charges for access to its network. Lord Young told MPs that his company, a subsidiary of Cable and Wireless, had to pay charges based on the historic cost of building the BT network and a 15 per cent profit margin.

He believes Mercury and others should be able to buy spare capacity in bulk from BT at a market price, then set its own charges to its customers. In an effort to force changes in the charging regime, Mercury is taking both BT and Ofcom to the telecoms regulator, to court over the interconnection regime.

Pennington, page 27

Jardine slides after surprise delisting move

FROM PATRICIA TEHAN IN HONG KONG

JARDINE Matheson broke an agreement with the Hong Kong Stock Exchange yesterday by announcing its plans to delist before the market closed.

Shares in the hotels-to-financial services holding company, fell HK\$4.75 (41.3p) to HK\$49.25 before trading was suspended, while Jardine group companies also fell sharply.

Paul Chow, chief executive of the exchange, said Jardine had indicated it would not announce its plans until after the market closed.

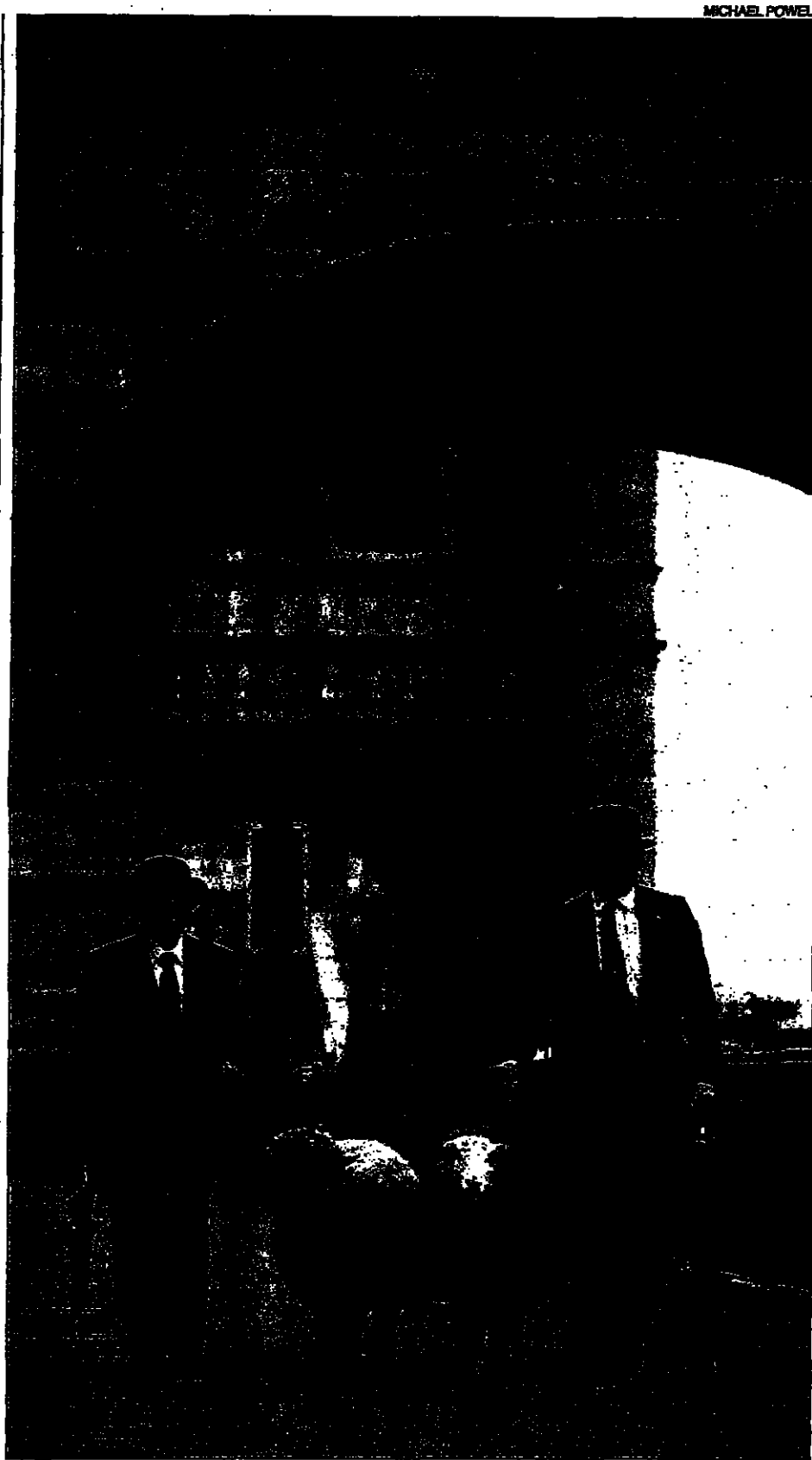
The plan to delist from Hong Kong had been widely expected. Jardine announced its intention to switch its listing to London in May 1990 and moved its primary listing in June 1991. The company has frequently complained that Hong Kong is over-regulated and the Keswick family, which controls the group, is wary about the future of corporate governance from 1997 when the colony passes back to

China. Mr Chow said he was resigned to the move, which removes 2.6 per cent of the stock market's capitalisation but was concerned about the investors, many of them in Hong Kong. The delisting will be official 180 days from yesterday.

He said the London Stock Exchange must now look very closely at the way the company is regulated and its investors protected. Jardine has been based in Bermuda since 1984, which officially means it is not administered by the Takeover Panel. It said it will be regulated by new Bermudan rules, from July, that will apply to Jardine alone.

Jardine yesterday unveiled a 23 per cent rise in profits after tax for 1993 to US\$388.8 million. Pre-tax profits were up from \$687.4 million to \$824.3 million. The total dividend is US\$22 cents, a rise of 18 per cent.

States blow, page 15
Pennington, page 27



Exercising rights: Jack Wolkind, alderman and freeman of the City of London, left, and John Marshall, MP and stockbroker, on Tower Bridge, exercising freemen's rights to take sheep over London bridges. They did so in aid of a National Kidney Research Fund walk.

Halifax hopes for chance to cut mortgage rate

By ROBERT MILLER

HALIFAX, the UK's largest building society, which yesterday announced a 27 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £866 million, promised to cut its mortgage rate if the Bank of England reduced its base rate by 0.25 per cent. The Halifax, with other societies, did not move its standard mortgage rate in response to February's 0.25 per cent base rate cut.

Jon Foulds, chairman of the

Halifax, which last year increased its share of the mortgage market to 19 per cent, said: "We will cut our variable mortgage rate but by how much will depend on market conditions at the time. But if we do cut it we will also have to reduce savers' rates." Mike Blackburn, chief executive, added: "We took the view that February's rate change was the first of two similar cuts."

Any rate cut is likely to be in the region of 0.25 per cent.

Mr Foulds expects house moves to pick up by about 15 per cent this year and prices to rise by 5 per cent by the year-end. Halifax financed 185,000 home moves in 1993. Net new lending was £3.2 billion - similar to the previous year.

Bad debt provisions fell to £271 million from £374 million in 1992-93. Losses before tax from the estate agency business fell from £18 million in 1992 to £4 million last year.

Barrett Developments, Britain's third-biggest house-builder, forecasts a 10 per cent jump in deals done and a 7 per cent rise in prices. Up to 550 jobs are to be axed by Alliance & Leicester Building Society under a restructuring to be implemented by 1995. The cuts will hit clerical workers and managers at society branches and at Girobank. The group hoped to achieve the cuts through voluntary means but compulsory redundancies have not been ruled out.

Unit trusts soar, page 26
Barratt booms, page 27

Race to save Swan shipyard

RECEIVERS to the collapsed Swan Hunter shipyard, on Tyneside, were last night racing against the clock to secure a deal that could save the yard and the jobs of its remaining 1,050 workers (Ross Tieman writes).

Talks were continuing in London with officials from Constructions Mécaniques de Normandie (CMN), a French shipyard that hopes to underwrite a Swan bid for a £30 million contract to refurbish a Navy supply ship.

If the terms of a joint bid can be agreed, and it succeeds, CMN will take over the Swan yard and complete the two Type 23 frigates nearing completion there.

The Ministry of Defence last night said it had provided all the assurances sought by CMN that it would be treated the same as British-owned yards vying for the contract. Bids to refit the Sir Bedivere, a 412 ft, 3,270 tonne logistic landing ship, have to be delivered to the MoD today.

The CMN/Swan offer will face tough competition. Seven other British yards were invited to bid for the work: the Devonport and Rosyth royal dockyards, VSEL and Yarrow Shipbuilders, and three smaller civil yards - A&P Appledore, Appledore Shipbuilders and Tees Dockyard.

Only two Type 23 frigates are still being fitted out at Swan Hunter. HMS Northumberland is scheduled to be finished on May 12; HMS Richmond is set for completion in November.

BUSINESS EDITOR
Robert Ballantyne



BRACING



Kingfisher suffered a small drop in profits from its British shops such as Comet, B&Q, Woolworths and Superdrug
Page 27, Tempos 29

RED LIGHT

New rules have been published to improve the quality of selling personal pensions after mis-selling to company scheme members
Page 26

OIL SPILL



Lasmo, the exploration and production group, is making more oil but less money. Assets are being sold in an effort to cut costs
Page 28, Tempos 29

DRIVE

Lex Service, Britain's largest car distribution and leasing group, motored ahead last year and plans to expand
Tempos 29, page 30

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LONDON CLOSING PRICES

MARKETS IN DETAIL PAGE 28, SHARE PRICES PAGE 38

Watchdog tightens rules on pension transfers

By Sara McConnell
PERSONAL FINANCE CORRESPONDENT

LIFE offices whose agents advise customers to transfer out of company pension schemes and into personal pensions will in future have to prove to regulators that they have double-checked every recommendation. But companies selling their policies through independent financial advisers will not be expected to carry out the same checks.

The Securities and Investments Board yesterday published new rules for sales of pension transfers. It said they were "designed to raise the quality of sales practices". The SIB promised tighter rules on pension transfer sales at the end of last year, after publication of a

report stating that, of 735 files checked, 91 per cent contained insufficient information or positive evidence that inappropriate policies had been sold. Up to 100,000 people could have been wrongly advised to transfer funds out of company schemes, regulators fear.

Under new rules, staff at life company head offices will be expected to check all pension transfer business done by salesmen at branch offices. However, the SIB has dropped plans to compel life offices to submit business coming in from independent financial advisers to the same scrutiny. The regulator said this would give life companies "responsibility without power". Independent financial advisers are not directly answerable to life offices and the SIB said a life company would not be

able to judge whether transfers were suitable, because it did not have access to enough information. Instead, small firms of independent financial advisers will be expected to make statements to their regulator, giving reasons why they advised transfers.

For the first time, life companies and independent advisers will be expected to notify their regulator if more than 1 per cent of their pension transfer business is "execution-only", with customers specifying what sort of personal pensions they want to transfer into. Regulators will also have to be told if more than 1 per cent of a firm's business is from "insistent customers" — those who insist on transferring, although they are advised against it. In the past, some firms have claimed that business is

"execution-only" or "insistent customer" to get round the suitable advice rules.

Some firms are likely to be barred from arranging pension transfers. From November 1, those wanting to offer transfers will have to tell regulators and submit statements of competence. From next July, they will have to be licensed by their regulator to arrange transfers.

Firms that still carry out pension transfers will find regulators paying particular attention to that area of their business. There will be 14-day cooling-off periods for customers sold personal pensions. Salesmen will also have to issue customers with "reason why" letters and give them computer-generated transfer analyses, in plain language.

Ferranti managers make consortium buy-out bid

MANAGERS at Ferranti International, the collapsed electronic systems and defence group, have made a consortium bid to buy out the core systems company. They are expected to face competition from GEC, British Aerospace and others. The Ferranti managers, headed by marketing director Phil Burton, say their offer would secure the jobs of 1,700 employees and lead to a relatively simple solution to the company's problems. Their offer was sent to the administrative receivers, John Talbot and Murdoch McKillop of Arthur Andersen, the accountant, on Monday.

Mr Burton said financing for the buy-out bid was "substantially complete" and work was under way to finance the terms of a share offer to employees. A trade partner, believed to be Thomson CSF of France, would take a minority stake. Talks between the receivers and all the would-be bidders are continuing. The receivers hope to choose a preferred bidder within the next two weeks.

ASB reviews standard

THE Accounting Standards Board is to review the first accounting standard for which it was responsible just two years after it was brought into force. The board has asked for comments by June 30 on possible changes to Financial Reporting Standard 1, which introduced a new primary cash flow statement. Although FRS1 was generally welcomed when promulgated, there have been scathing criticisms from some companies and accountants since, over its form, content and definitions. But the ASB emphasises that the review does not imply that the standard will be changed. Accountancy, page 31

TT looking to expand

TT Group, the industrial holding company whose 1993 pre-tax profits rose by 43.7 per cent to £23.9 million, expects further growth in profits and earnings in 1994. Timothy Reed, chairman, says 1993 results covering the 12 months to December 25 were the seventh consecutive year of advance. The year's dividend rises from an adjusted 5.8p to 6.6p a share. The group raised a net £51.4 million through a rights issue in August, and remains net cash positive. This will enable TT to make acquisitions and also to finance a programme of capital investment in its existing operations.

Dagenham cash call

DAGENHAM Motors Group, the London and South East Ford main dealer, accompanied a healthy jump in full-year profits with a call on shareholders for £9.9 million through a two-for-five rights issue at 153p a share. The proceeds from the rights issue, which is underwritten by Samuel Montagu, will be used by Dagenham to bolster its balance sheet and position it for future acquisition opportunities. Pre-tax profits advanced by 58.5 per cent to £23.5 million in the year to December 31. The final dividend is raised to 4.5p (4p), giving an increased total of 6.25p (5.75p) for the year.

Poundstretcher talks

BROWN & Jackson, which runs the Poundstretcher discount chain, confirmed it is in discussions with a South African discount retailer to invest money in the struggling company. Ian Gray, chief executive, said talks with Pepkor, which runs 1,800 predominantly discount stores in South Africa, were at a preliminary stage. Last week, Brown & Jackson, which made a loss of £12.7 million last year, warned that it could not continue trading unless its bankers agreed to fund £14 million of additional working capital facilities or it found another retailer prepared to take a stake in it.

Burn Stewart dives

BURN Stewart Distillers, the whisky company, disappointed the City with lower profits and a downbeat interim statement. The company said competition remained fierce "at price levels which provide very poor margins for producers". Pre-tax profits in the second half of 1993 slumped to £1.8 million, from £4.3 million. The interim dividend is held at 1.7p but the shares fell 4p, to 129p. Sales of cases exceeded a million for the first time in 1993.

Post Office prepared to back partial privatisation

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

THE Post Office is ready to back the privatisation of part of Britain's postal service, with the Royal Mail and Parcelforce moving into the private sector while Post Office Counters remains in public ownership.

Senior Post Office executives yesterday declared their intention to make such a move a success if — as looks likely — the Government favours such a proposal as the conclusion of its 20-month-long review of the future of the Post Office.

Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, will today come under strong pressure to announce the long-delayed conclusions of his review when an influential all-party Commons committee will urge him to report the findings to the Commons without delay.

Post Office managers are likely to welcome warmly the findings of the Commons select committee on trade and industry, which will declare that the Post Office cannot be retained in its present form.

Although the committee's report will stop short of advocating outright privatisation of the Post Office, its support for the Post Office's claim for freedom, together with its expected conclusion that Mr Heseltine should bring forward any necessary legislative proposals to enact the outcome of his review, will be seen by

many senior Post Office managers as all but an endorsement of moving the Post Office into the private sector.

Mr Heseltine is likely to be irritated by the committee's likely criticism of his rejection of the Post Office's claims that what senior Post Office officials call the "planning blight" caused by the long review has damaged the Post Office's reputation and performance.

Because of fears expressed by Conservative MPs about the impact in their constituencies of privatising the Post Office in full, ministers are thought to favour keeping Post Office Counters business in the public sector, while privatising the Royal Mail and its parcels business, Parcelforce.

Bill Cockburn, the Post Office chief executive, said yesterday that if the Government opted for such a split sale, Post Office managers "would work to make it a tremendous success". He emphasised that decisions on ownership of the Post Office were a matter for the Government rather than Post Office management.

Mr Heseltine has, in effect, ruled out the Post Office's proposed "halfway house" option of greater commercial freedom while staying in the public sector. Yet he also accepts that the current position cannot be maintained indefinitely in the face of growing Continental competition.



Intrum Justitia, Europe's biggest debt collector, whose yacht has just won the fourth leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race, is to swap directors with Payco, the largest US debt collector. Bo Göranson, above, Intrum chief executive, will join the Payco board and Dennis Patches, the Payco chairman, will join the Intrum board. City Dairy, page 29

Hill Samuel abandons life market

By Sarah Bagnall, Insurance Correspondent

HILL Samuel Financial Services, a subsidiary of TSB, is to withdraw from the life and pensions market.

HSFS's decision not to accept any new business from the end of next month follows a year-long review which concluded that the operation was too small to compete profitably for new business.

Hugh Freeberg, chief executive of Hill Samuel Group, said: "We are making the move because we took a view of the way the market is

evolving. We see it as polarising between those with a captive customer base, namely the bank-assurance operations, and those with a large direct selling force."

HSFS's life and pensions policy sales fell by £60 million, to £136 million, in the year to last October and the division's profits slumped by £4 million, to £13 million.

HSFS is axing 250 administrative jobs and will have to close some of the 30 divisional and regional offices across the

UK. Its direct sales force, all of whom are self-employed and therefore not entitled to redundancy pay, are being interviewed by Allied Dunbar, Britain's biggest unit-linked life company. Mr Freeberg said he expected many to be offered jobs.

Hill Samuel will continue to provide services to its 220,000 policyholders.

The City expects a further 30 life companies to follow suit over the next few years, in sharp contrast to the recent

entry of blue-chip companies such as Marks and Spencer, the retailer.

Mr Freeberg said he thought the market was "overcrowded" and that more companies would find it impossible to write business profitably in coming years.

Hill Samuel, which was bought by TSB for £777 million six years ago, was widely believed to be up for sale until last Christmas, when TSB said it planned to invest in the merchant bank.

Institutions invest record sum

By Janet Bush, Economics Correspondent

INVESTMENT by British institutions soared to a record £32.2 billion last year, the highest since the Central Statistical Office started keeping these figures in 1963. The total compared with £35.8 billion in 1992. Total net investment in the fourth quarter was a record £14.9 billion. Of this, £4.9 billion was invested in British shares, £3.6 billion in foreign company shares, £2.3 billion in other assets including land and property, £2.1 billion in gilts and £2 billion in short-term assets.

Investment trusts invested a record £2 billion in the fourth quarter, partly reflecting the launch of several trusts to take advantage of new legislation allowing corporate investment in the Lloyd's insurance market. There was a net investment of £1 billion in British land, property and ground rents in the fourth quarter, reversing some of the disinvestment in the previous two.

Unit trusts soar at societies' expense

By Robert Miller

FIGURES released by the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds (AUIF) show net sales of unit trusts in February were £72 million. This compares with £490 million in January and £580 million in February 1993.

The inflow of funds into unit trusts during the first two months of this year corresponds to outflows from building society accounts. Last week, the Building Societies Association said that since the beginning of the year nearly £670 million had been withdrawn from savings accounts.

Sales of Personal Equity Plans before the end of the tax year on April 5 helped to push unit trust sales. Victoria Nye, AUIF communications director, said: "The strong demand for UK equity unit trusts, which qualify for a PEP, indicates many people are also making sure that by minimising tax liability, they can maximise potential returns."

In spite of the continuing

success of unit trusts in attracting investors from banks and building societies, unit trust groups have yet to break the £100 billion level of funds under management. Last month they fell from January's £99.9 billion to £98.9 billion.

AUIF said this was due to the downturn in UK and some international markets in February. The most popular sector for private investors was International Growth funds, which attracted a net inflow of £115 million.

Ms Nye added that although the PEP deadline undoubtedly helped to push unit trust sales up there were grounds for believing the strong inflow of funds would continue. She said: "People are coming across unit trusts far more regularly now through banks, building societies and life companies. And they are being promoted for specific needs such as retirement provision, helping to fund mortgages and school fees."

Gold loans give central banks boost

By Colin Campbell

CENTRAL banks and other official monetary institutions are earning between \$100 million and \$140 million a year by lending gold from their official reserves as they more actively managed their assets, a World Gold Council survey shows.

Ian Cox, formerly of Samuel Montagu and now an independent consultant, says almost 2,000 tonnes of gold were on loan to the market by mid-1993, and that up to 50 central banks are actively engaged in the gold lending process.

Certain European central banks do not lend gold, but the total amount lent by European central banks is about 600 tonnes.

Banks in Latin America and East Asia are playing an increasingly active role in the lending market, Mr Cox suggests.

The study, *The Gold Borrowing Market - A Decade of Growth*, is available free from the World Gold Council.

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□ When technology outstrips the rules □ Following the spirit of the Code □ Jardine upsets the Chinese again

Buddies on the super-highway

□ REVOLUTIONS bring strange alliances. The convergence in the interests of British Telecom and Mercury Communications, predicted by Pennington three months ago, is fast becoming apparent. Mercury's Lord Young calmly set the new agenda yesterday by declaring his full support for BT chairman Sir Iain Vallance — at a price. BT should be allowed to transmit TV pictures and anything else to its phone subscribers from tomorrow, he told MPs, if only it would allow all and sundry access to its wires at "economic" rates.

Arcane though it may seem, this debate is of the highest importance to the growth of the British economy and job creation over the next decade, as the trade and industry select committee has recognised. Ministers at the G7 summit agreed that the construction of "information super-highways" offers the best prospect for good new jobs.

Lord Young reckons Britain is about five years behind America, but ten years ahead of the rest of Europe and Japan, in the race to develop a telecommunications system for the next century. We arrived at this point, he argues, by the belated introduction of highly regulated competition. But technology is now moving a great deal faster than regulation. From being ahead in fibre-optic

cables, Britain is in danger of regulating itself down the league. A few years ago, ministers thought the best way to promote competition was to get Mercury to build a network of long distance phone wires, complemented by an alternative local loop provided by cable television companies. To improve the economics, they barred BT from offering broadcast TV down its wires, pending a review in 1998.

Now, it seems, you can send video-on-demand down existing copper phone wires without blocking phone calls, or beam a choice of 40 TV channels into the home from a radio aerial at the local exchange. It would be a waste of resources, Lord Young argues, to build complete duplicate networks, especially of optical fibre.

Common sense says he is right, as well as realistic now that cable providers are no longer captive allies to Mercury. The over-riding lesson of Britain's utility privatisations is that the delivery network should be distinct from the provision of services. Further evolution of Britain's telecoms industry is

bound to focus on opening up BT's network to all comers. To build a duplicate network is absurd, if existing local lines, used on average only four minutes a day, can do the job to the customer's satisfaction.

This logic poses the regulator and the government with a headache. BT's price cap is fixed until 1997, when Don Cruickshank, the regulator, says he may shift controls to the network alone. Protection has been promised to the cable companies until 1998. But Britain's chance of a world lead in information services should not be sacrificed on the altar of regulation.

Nods, winks and the London way

□ HOW about this for a cynical view of regulation. "How can one ensure a common understanding of the Code without writing it down and how, if you do write it down, do you prevent people from focusing on the letter of the code in a legalistic way rather than upholding the spirit which lies behind it?" This

PENNINGTON



was, however, the Bank of England speaking yesterday in its most worthy mode, defending the penchant for nods and winks and private wrist-slapping that still lies deep in its psyche.

Pen Kent, the Bank director responsible for its "London Approach" to corporate rescue, was grappling with the threat that it might be unravelled by the market developing in the debt of companies in trouble. The Bank pioneered efforts to persuade banks and other creditors to stick together, so as to save defaulting companies with viable businesses by a pain-sharing financial reconstruction, which might be killed off if one bank pulls the rug. In this instance, the informal approach has worked well,

thanks in part to the Bank acting as honest broker. But if discontented banks sell their debt at a knockdown price, it might well pay new creditors, including vulture funds, to call in the receiver or otherwise rock the orderly lifeboat the main creditors are trying to launch.

This is not academic. Credit Suisse caused something of a stir three weeks ago when it sold a £25 million exposure to Queens Moat in the secondary market at a touchy moment. At the weekend, Gary Klesch, who likes this end of the bond market, called for Heron bondholders to play hard and urged that a receiver be put in, complaining that banks had unfair inside information.

The distressed corporate debt market is a two-edged sword. As Mr Kent notes, new players could disrupt "well-intentioned efforts to preserve value". But it creates a safety valve for disenchanted creditors, helps banks' liquidity and provides a market for write-offs. Having rejected a code of conduct, he suggests an informal one. Debt sellers should tell fellow creditors in advance, as Credit Suisse

did, and instruct buyers in what is expected of them under the London approach, including, no doubt, that they might expect a call from the Bank.

The embarrassing issue of trading on inside information is left to hang. Perhaps there is no answer that would avoid crippling either the market or the London approach. Indeed, if Mr Kent's pragmatism is to work, his chaps may have to do so much nodding and winking that they get a permanent tick.

Hong deserts the Kong

□ JARDINE Matheson's latest break with Hong Kong is the culmination of a long period of mutual disillusion. The princely hong and the Keswick family used to rule the peak in the commercial matters that count there. Neither side has really been able to adjust to the changes that gradually reduced that uncomfortable relationship. First there was the growth of local entrepreneurs such as Sir YK Pao and later Li Kashing, who

outpaced the Lowlands expatriates. Then came the treaty, the growth of mainland interests and the predominance of banks. Jardines liked to be top dog but did not like all the commitments and responsibilities that went with it. The new Hong Kong disliked perceived arrogance but expected Jardines to act as establishment paternalist.

In all this, the supposed argument over takeover codes is merely symbolic. Jardine burnt its boats when it moved its registration at a politically tricky time for confidence, set about diversifying its interests worldwide then switched the group's primary share listings to London. As local magnates have been building bridges and making themselves welcome to the mainland regime, Jardine has ever more become the bad boy of the business community, the unreconstructed representative of the old ways.

Even so, the break is painful. Where Jardine goes, its main associates, including the bigger Hongkong Land, seem certain to follow, removing 6 per cent of the market capitalisation and, as 1997 approaches, making a still-powerful section of Hong Kong business symbolically foreign owned. Who will lose most from this will not fully emerge until the turn of the century, but it does not look good for either.

Kingfisher price policy in doubt as earnings slip

By SUSAN GILCHRIST

KINGFISHER'S strategy of "everyday low prices" was called into question, as the group revealed a drop in profits from its British retail chains.

Overall group pre-tax profits rose by 51 per cent, from £204.8 million to £309.3 million, in the year to January 29. However, the increase was driven by a first-time contribution of £79.2 million from Darty, France's leading electrical retailer, which was acquired for £1 billion last June. It was also helped by the

absence of development losses at Chartwell Land, the group's property arm; such losses depressed profits by £26.4 million in the previous year.

Operating profits from the British chains, which comprise B&Q, Comet, Woolworths and Superdrug, slipped by 1.5 per cent, largely owing to a fall in profits from toys at Woolworths and a weak second half at Superdrug.

Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, the chairman, insisted that the group's strategy of low prices,

customer service and wide merchandise ranges was working, though the businesses were "at somewhat different stages".

B&Q, the DIY chain, was the only business to make progress. Profits increased from £81.1 million to £82 million, despite £6 million of costs for new store openings. The new Depot stores are to be renamed B&Q Warehouse and future investment will be directed towards sites of about 100,000 sq ft.

Comet's profits fell from £17.7 million to £16.4 million, though its market share edged up from 9.9 to 10.1 per cent on strong sales of white goods. Sir Geoffrey said the chain was being held back by the age of its stores, at least half of which were more than five years old. The stores are to be revamped and "new concept" outlets, which include a larger product range and reduced emphasis on discounts, are being tested.

Darty also gained share in a declining market, though profits for the eight months from June slipped to £79.2 million (£84.3 million).

A weak performance in toys and video games hit profits at Woolworths, which fell to £74.5 million (£77.8 million). Sir Geoffrey said: "After a very good first half in toys, Woolworths overbought and had to take substantial mark-downs in the second half, when growth in the toy market had begun to decline." Video games were similarly affected. New systems have been introduced to prevent a recurrence of the problem. Mr Mulcahy said 1993 was "a year of transition" at Superdrug, with profits down from £34.8 million to £31.5 million. The chain is shifting its emphasis from household and grocery products towards personal care and toiletry items. New store formats are also being introduced.

A final dividend of 10.5p (9.5p) brings the total for the year to 14.9p (13.7p), an increase of 8.8 per cent.



Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy defended overall strategy

Tempus, page 29

Profits and payout double at Barratt Developments

By MARTIN WALLER, DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

THE resurgent Barratt Developments, now being managed back to financial health by Sir Lawrence Barratt, the founder, after his re-emergence from retirement, has unveiled doubled profits and dividends and an optimistic outlook for the housing market.

On turnover up 25 per cent to £218 million in the half-year to end-December, Barratt managed to boost operating margins from 5.1 to 6.7 per cent and pre-tax profits from £4.8 million to £11.3 million. The half-year dividend doubled to 2p.

Sir Lawrence said his company had now virtually traded out of unprofitable developments in Britain,

while sales reservations for its homes had risen by 18 per cent in the first half and by a similar rate since the start of 1994.

Therefore, while the company achieved 2,302 completions in the first half, on average selling prices that actually fell from £75,800 to £74,600, the rate of both sales and profitability was significantly higher on new sites started over the past year.

Barratt bought 4,593 plots during the half-year at an average cost that represented less than 20 per cent of current selling prices. Sir Lawrence dismissed suggestions that next month's tax increases might disrupt the continuing im-

provement in the housing market.

Sir Lawrence said the group's Californian activities were plagued with the same symptoms of heavy levels of mortgage arrears, repossessions and widespread negative equity that had depressed the market in the south east of England until recently. Californian losses were trimmed by \$1 million to \$700,000 in the first half.

Barratt has no intention of pulling out of California, but will withdraw from commercial property, with eventual sales of the £12 million-worth of assets still left.

Tempus, page 29

Devro leaps to £18m

DEVRO International, the world's leading producer of collagen sausage skins, which was floated on the stock market last June, has declared a maiden final dividend of 4.17p a share after a rise in full-year profits (Martin Flanagan writes).

Pre-tax profits in 1993 were £18 million, against £13.1 million in the

previous 12 months. Graeme Alexander, chief executive, said: "This was achieved in the face of difficult trading conditions as a worldwide recession affected most of our markets." The shares, offered at 170p, yesterday fell 12½p to 244½p.

Earnings per share were 10.5p, the same as the previous year.

Shops drive lifts UniChem

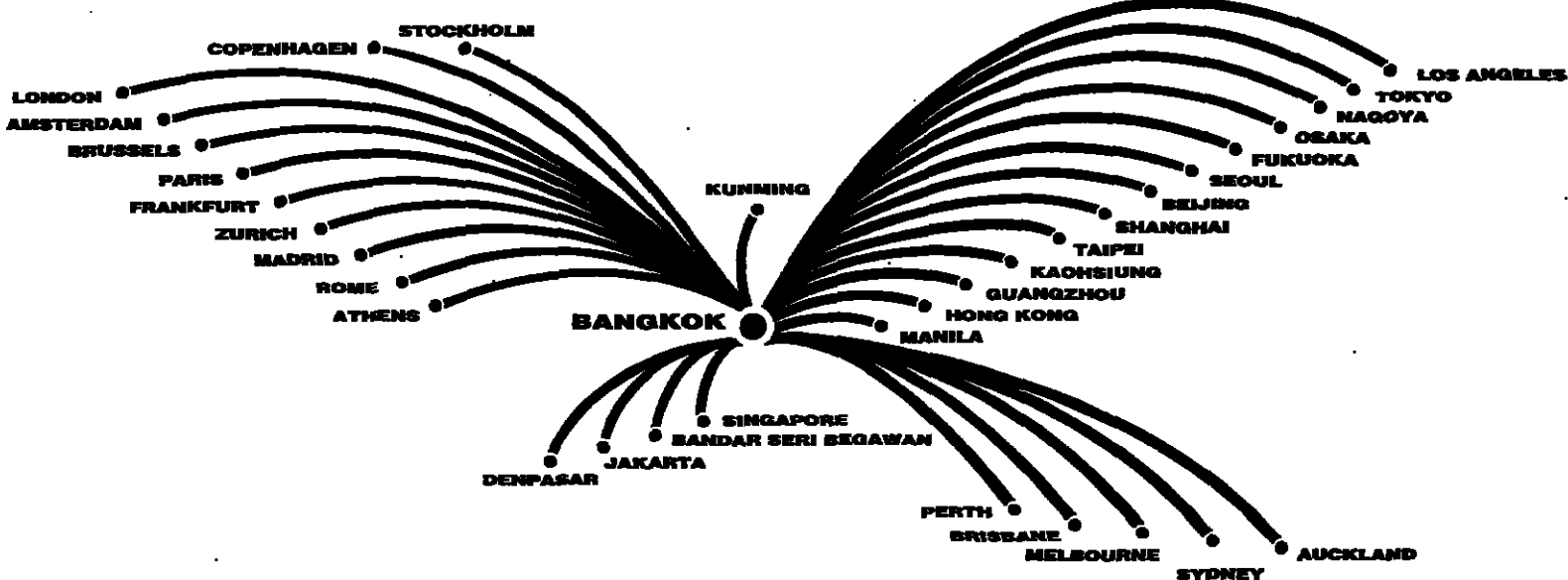
CONTINUED brisk expansion of its shops helped UniChem, the pharmaceutical wholesaler and retail chemist, to lift 1993 pre-tax profits to £37.5 million, from £29.4 million (Sarah Bagnall writes).

UniChem added 55 shops last year, making 253 at the December 31 year-end and helping to lift retail profits by

37 per cent, to £6.6 million. UniChem has since acquired a further 28 shops. Pharmaceutical wholesaling, its biggest operation, lifted profits by £4.3 million, to £33.5 million, on a £121.5 million rise in turnover, to £1.1 billion.

The total dividend rises by 15 per cent, to 6.5p, via a final 4.3p. Earnings per share rose to 17.3p, from 13.4p.

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The PM
is foolin

MICHAEL CLARK

100

ECONOMIC VIEW

The PM, the Bank and who is fooling whom on inflation

Anatole Kaletsky argues that, while economic cycles cannot be avoided, the trick is to follow policies that moderate the natural ups and downs

Exactly two weeks ago, the Prime Minister and the Bank of England had an unusual public argument. Mr Major boasted to a group of businessmen in Portsmouth that inflation in Britain had finally been defeated and was "under lock and key". A few hours later, Rupert Pennant-Rea, the Bank's deputy governor, declared to financial analysts in London that anyone who declared a victory in the war against inflation was suffering from "a delusion, and a dangerous one too".

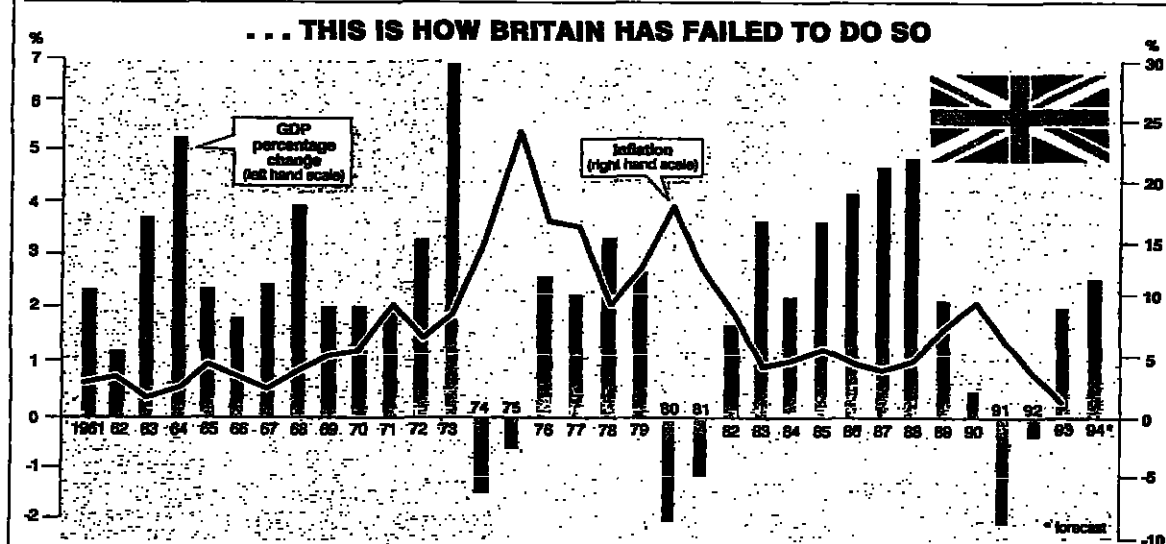
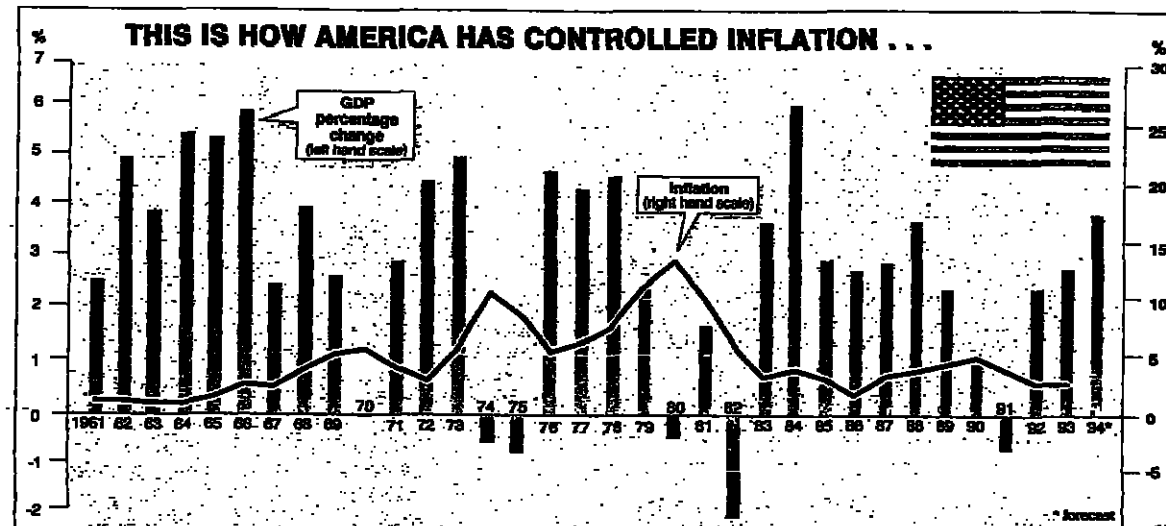
As usual, when it comes to inflation, the markets were initially impressed by the view of the Bank of England — and, as usual, the Bank is likely to be proved wrong. As Janet Bush pointed out on this page last month, drawing on an analysis by Midland Global Markets, the Bank has over-estimated inflation in five of the six quarterly analyses published since November 1992, when its regular Inflation Reports started. In each case the Bank has predicted that inflation would rise from whatever level it had hit in the month before the Report was published (4 per cent at the time of the first Inflation Report). Five out of six times this assessment has proved wrong, even though the Bank was forecasting a mere three months ahead.

The reason why the Bank is usually wrong about inflation is not that its economists are incompetent or its deputy-governor stupid. On the contrary, some of the finest brains in British economics are employed by the Bank. But the fact is that the Bank can no longer be trusted on matters of inflation, for in this area Bank officials are no longer performing professional analysis or dispassionately pursuing the national interest. They are engaged in an old-fashioned bureaucratic struggle for independence and monetary power. More in a minute about the Bank's philosophy and how it contrasts with the successful professionalism of the US Federal Reserve. But first let us look at the facts.

Yesterday's retail prices index may have been slightly worse than City analysts had expected, but the fact is that inflation has actually fallen from a level that was already extraordinarily low — from 2.5 per cent in the year to January to 2.4 per cent last month. Even in terms of the misnamed "underlying rate" selected by the Treasury to measure inflation's performance against the official 1 per cent to 4 per cent target, the recent figures have been unmitigated good news. This Treasury rate, which excludes mortgage interest costs, was 2.8 per cent in both January and February.

On the more sensible definition of underlying inflation proposed by the Bank of England, which would not only exclude mortgage rates but also the own goals scored by the Treasury when it raises indirect taxes, inflation is now down to 2.5 per cent. And this figure, like the headline definition that includes both mortgages and indirect taxes, is almost certain to fall further next month.

But far more important than statistical blips from one month to another, are the long-term economic trends that will determine the prospects for inflation in the years ahead. It is on this score that the Bank's analysis is most dangerously wrongheaded — and con-



trasts with the cautious, pragmatic policy followed by the Federal Reserve. When Mr Pennant-Rea warns against declaring a victory over inflation, what he is really warning against is any further action to stimulate the economy — i.e. he is merely expressing the Bank's institutional opposition to cuts in interest rates at any time. (It is now clear that the Bank has opposed all three reductions in interest rates since January 1993 — if the Bank had had its way, base rates would presumably still be 7 per cent.)

What Mr Pennant-Rea really believes — and what other Bank officials are forced to pretend to believe — is not that inflation is about to rise sharply in the next year or so, but rather that monetary policy should be kept as tight as possible for as long as possible in order to crush "inflationary expectations". Instead of these expectations, the Bank wants to create something called "monetary credibility", which will ensure that inflation does not accelerate in the years after 1995.

To see why this policy is wrongheaded — one might call it a "delusion, and a dangerous one too" — consider the comparison between British and American experience illustrated in the chart. Over the last 25 years both countries have gone through four major inflation cycles, with peaks in 1969-70, 1973-74, 1979-80 and 1989. But in each case, Britain has suffered substantially higher peaks and then orchestrated much more severe recessions to bring inflation down. By contrast, the troughs of each of the inflation cycles in the two countries have differed far less. In both countries inflation fell to around 2 per cent in the 1961-69 and 1980-89 cycles and bottomed out at around 4 per cent in the 1970-73 cycle. Only in the 1974-79 cycle, did Britain fail to reduce inflation to anywhere near the 5 per cent level America achieved in 1978.

One lesson that seems to follow from

this comparison, which could be repeated across many other countries, is that there is no reliable correlation between how low inflation falls at the bottom of a cycle and how high it rises at the next peak. In other words, you can crush inflation as hard as you like at the low-point, but this does not guarantee a good performance once price pressures begin to build up. But this merely begs the question of what is responsible for the build-up of inflationary pressures at the cyclical peak.

The answer is that inflation accelerates when labour shortages emerge against a background of full employment, when factories are working flat out with insufficient new capacity coming on line, and often when the domestic economy is unable to meet demand, causing a balance of payments crisis and a sharp fall in the exchange rate. Sooner or later, this kind of inflationary situation is bound to develop, but the job of finance ministers and central bankers is to anticipate these pressures and take steps to avert them, or at least to ensure a "soft landing" in which inflation is moderated without an economic collapse.

Over the years, the American authorities have been generally successful in arranging such soft landings, with the deep recession of 1982 standing out as the exception. Britain, by contrast, has almost invariably failed. Perhaps the main reason for this contrasting experience is illustrated by the bars in the charts, which represent annual rates of GDP growth. In Britain each growth cycle has started slowly and accelerated sharply towards the end of the cycle — in 1964, 1973, 1978 and 1987. In each case, this late-cycle growth spurt has been followed by a sharp rise in inflation.

In America, by contrast, the economy has generally recorded its fastest growth rates at the beginning of each cycle, just after a period of recession. This was particularly notable in 1976 and 1984. After the initial spurt, which has rapidly dealt with the worst ravages of cyclical unemployment, growth has then settled down to more modest levels. While inflation has accelerated at the end of each cycle, it has never spun out of control, as it has in Britain immediately after the booms of 1973 and 1987.

The lesson from this experience is that economic cycles cannot be avoided, but that finance ministers and central bankers can time their policies to moderate or to exaggerate the natural ups and downs of the cycle. If they are genuinely concerned about inflation, they will try to achieve as early as possible in the cycle the rapid growth which has to come at some point unless a country is to accept perpetual mass unemployment in the style of France. Having achieved full employment they will then tighten monetary policy and stand ready to tighten further by raising taxes, as the peak of the cycle approaches with an upsurge of private investment and consumer demand. Fed officials have traditionally described this approach as "taking away the punchbowl when the party starts getting merry".

In Britain, however, this philosophy has all too often been reversed. Time and again governments have kept on the brakes too long after a recession, only to release them when they decided inflationary expectations had finally been "crushed". Already Kenneth Clarke has promised to repeat this error, hinting that taxes would be cut once the economy returned to rapid growth. As for the Bank of England, let me make a prediction: in about two years' time, Mr Pennant-Rea will declare that because of the Bank's prudent monetary policies, inflationary expectations have finally been vanquished — a few months later inflation will start to accelerate.

TEMPUS

The cost of low prices

IF it ain't broke don't fix it, goes the old saw, but Kingfisher's marketing men have added a proviso: consider changing the name. By most measures Kingfisher's DIY businesses are market leaders, but in a cut-throat world even 15 per cent of UK DIY sales is not enough and the company is hell-bent on grabbing more. Having launched Depot as the weapon that would sink the competition for the hardcore DIY man's wallet, Kingfisher is rebranding the biggest sheds "Warehouses".

But Kingfisher's Key DIY pricing policy acknowledges that price brings in punters, not brands. Despite achieving just a £1 million increase in profits, DIY is a star performer in growth terms with like for like increases of 4 per cent. Elsewhere, the results are less encouraging. Like for like sales fell at Comet and rose 2.5 per cent at Superdrug. The

slump in demand for videogame consoles caused profit to fall 4 per cent at Woolworths.

By pitching its tent at the bottom of the high street with its policy of low prices, Kingfisher needs volumes but that brings attendant problems. The lack of computerised stock control at Woolworths caused piles of unsold toys and games to build up; now the group is investing in EPoS. More worrying is the market position of Superdrug: the company grew like topsy in the manner of an American drugstore selling a range of groceries that drew it into conflict with the superstore. Its recent retreat back to shampoos and face creams makes sense but promises an equally daunting battle with Boots. The recent underperformance in the shares shows the market thinks the group risks paying dearly for its low price policy.

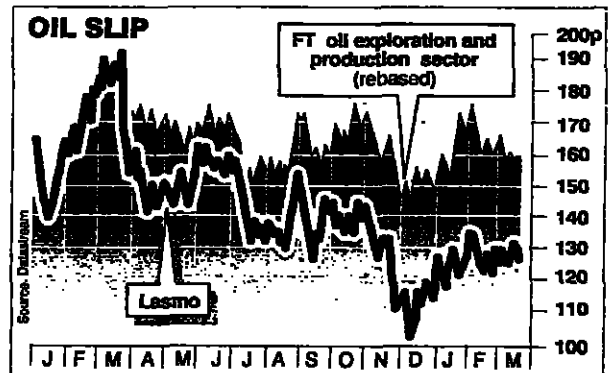
Lasmo

LASMO must have hoped that selling its Nubian stake at a good price would take the company off yesterday's tale of wretchedness, losses and dividend cuts. To be fair, the price looks attractive for an asset which can only be generating marginal profits, based on a £6 production cost and an oil price near £9. Added to that is Nubian's abandonment cost, reckoned to be £1 billion, when the field's life ends, near the end of the century.

The purchasers, Sun Oil and Ranger Oil, may be able to trim back operating costs and increase production efficiency with new drilling technology but the argument for owning high-cost North Sea assets must be a play on a rising oil price, a high stakes game which Lasmo would dearly like to exit.

Thanks to good cash flow and disposals, Lasmo is bringing down its debt and reducing its gearing. But the worry for shareholders is that a weak oil price could spoil the picture by forcing still further writedowns. The hit at the year end was largely technical, due to unsuccessful drilling in Nova Scotia and the extra cost of

installing a new platform in the North Sea, rather than to the oil price. If the crude price stays below \$14, Lasmo may have to look at its asset values again in June. In such a world, one questions the token penny dividend. Its £7 million cost may be a drop in the ocean but it would be better invested in the business.



Barratt

BARRATT'S latest range of houses may look like a post-modernist design for Anne Hathaway's Cottage, fake Elizabethan timbers jostling with Dutch gables and any number of other architectural features, but the company is convinced they have "kerb appeal," or instant attraction to the casual passer-by. They will need it, if Barratt is to meet its target of 8,000 house sales, and 10 per cent pre-tax margins, by 1995-96.

The group's three-year plan, now nine months old, is proceeding at a cracking pace. The interim figures prompted analysts to raise current year forecasts. The best news came from the South East, back in profit after four years of losses, giving 30 per cent of volume and capable, Barratt says, of a similar proportion of profits in due course.

Southern California remains a drain but may be back in the black by the year end, while Barratt is trading out of commercial property. Sir Lawrie is notoriously cautious over land, preferring to sit on a land bank of

just two and a half years rather than the five years some of his rivals favour.

Time will tell which is the right course. Meanwhile, the shares, assuming £37 million pre-tax this year, are selling on less than 18 times earnings, at which level they can rely on further support.

Lex Service

LEX made a virtue out of necessity two years ago when it was forced to sell its Volvo distribution rights. By recycling the proceeds into the acquisition of Swan National's car dealerships the group became tightly geared to the recovery in the domestic car market. That was further enhanced last year when the group invested the cash it raised from the sale of the Arrow Electronics stake into the acquisition of Arlington.

With debts of only £14 million, Lex has big scope for more acquisitions, but there are few other large dealership groups on the market, and the motor manufacturers could become uncooperative if they thought Lex was becoming too dominant. So growth is more likely to come

from smaller deals which should still enable it to raise its dealer chain from the present 127 to its 150 target. The group may also expand the lease fleet by acquisition. Lex's growth looks assured without acquisitions, given the 7 per cent growth forecast in new car sales this year and an estimated 8 per cent rise in used car prices. This makes the shares, trading on 17 times current year earnings forecasts, look better value than companies where the recovery story is unproven.

New issues

GIVEN the rate at which the stock market has been falling in recent weeks, the new issues bandwagon was likely to grind to a halt. The flop of Capital Shopping Centres' public offer was caused by a combination of ambitious pricing, a shortage of publicity and this week's downward lurch in the market. Such failures make investors wary and the flow of new issues could quickly dry up if there are similar incidents. Meanwhile, the sub-underwriters of the House of Fraser public offer may be getting nervous.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Tebbit's loss is Dubai's gain

SIR John Banham, former director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, and now at the helm of Tarmac, the construction group, has not, I hear, had the easiest of weeks. Busy doing a round of interviews to plug his new book on how Britain should be run in the 1990s, Sir John had rapidly to refile his schedule on Tuesday afternoon when a distress call came in from another industrial pundit, Sir John Harvey-Jones. The star of *Trouble-shooter* was speaking at a high-powered conference in Dubai on the problems of world economics, and the price of a barrel of oil, when a speaker had to drop out at the last moment. Sir John was duly whisked off to Dubai on the afternoon flight to fill the gap with his usual debonair and gracious manner. Unfortunately, in so doing he left poor old Lord Tebbit in the lurch at Sky Television, where he was preparing to do a live interview with Sir John on his evening programme.

ONE of the stranger aspects of the Wallace Duncan Smith trial was the saga of the banker's hair-line, the rim of which has steadily receded since his arrest in 1991. Smith's barrister summed up the ordeal thus: "It's turned a man with brown hair and a little bald patch into someone resembling Kojak with a little grey at the side."

Heart of things

GAMBRO, one of the world's leading medical technology groups, has eyed the UK market for some time with a view

to setting up specialised one-job clinics to off-load certain tasks (for good money) from our fragmenting National Health Service. Berthold Lindqvist, the Swedish group's president, in London to detail his company's 30 per cent growth in pre-tax profits in 1993, expects to have set up a clinic in Britain by next year offering renal dialysis services. Earlier thoughts about a UK coronary clinic, like the one Gambro operates in Gothenburg, have been abandoned. But why the change of heart? With the cynical real-

ism of a man whose company has seen profits rise year by year for the past decade, Lindqvist explains: "Unlike dialysis, heart surgery is not a repeat business". No softies either, these new age vikings.

Name games

BO GÖRANSSON, the keen Swedish sailor at the helm of Intrum Justitia, Europe's leading debt collector, has long sought to shift the public perception of his industry away from the traditional image of the heavy at the door. Given his efforts, it is unfortunate that the head of Payco, a US "accounts receivable management services group" — in other words, debt collector — with which the London-listed Intrum is now forging closer ties is one Dennis Punches.

Grub's up

AT LAST — an end to those grey, boring, boarding-school-style meals in Whitehall, in an astonishing display of gluttony, the Treasury has appointed a new caterer to add some spice to the monotonous lunches regularly dished up

for its 1,300 staff. From April 5, a day to be remembered with fear by Treasury mandarins for years to come, Gardner Merchant will be introducing a varied range of cuisine, ranging from Cajun dishes à la New Orleans to Far Eastern satays — avoiding Malaysian dishes, of course. This dramatic move makes the Treasury a reluctant bed-fellow of Hambros Bank, Chase Manhattan and Industrial Bank of Japan, among others in the City who rely on GM's skills. Happily for traditionalists, GM will be more than happy to whip up spotted dick on demand — but draws the line at soggy cabbage.

WORD from Bangkok of Patrick Gilliam's rise in sartorial elegance appears to have been exaggerated. The Standard Chartered chairman, in Thailand to celebrate the bank's centenary there, was reported to have arrived for a reception with the King in full morning dress. Happily, I hear that he was wearing a lounge suit as required, and was never in danger of over-dressing.

JON ASHWORTH



BUSINESS LETTER

Anger at Rover sale is justified

From N.J.D. Baptiste

Sir, Your correspondent Kevin Eason comments (March 18) re the BMW takeover of Rover, that the public "so far, and somewhat surprisingly, has been on the side of the Japanese company" (Honda). I am astonished at his surprise, considering the facts. First, Rover's success in increasing its car sales last year by 10 per cent against the international market trend, thanks to 15 years of close co-operation with Honda, which have provided the company with lean production technology and unrivalled quality standards which have made Hondas the most reliable cars in the world (four faults per 100 cars produced, compared with BMW's 37).

Second, Honda's insistence that Rover should remain a British company and its offer to raise its share to 47 per cent, with BAE keeping 47 per cent and the remaining 5 per cent going to Rover's management and staff. Third, the surrender to BMW of the last remaining British-owned volume car company and its world-leading four-wheel drive division at far less than its real value, after having been sold to BAE by the Government at an artificially low price subsidised by the British taxpayer, especially when BAE could have sold off instead some of its barely profitable operations.

The attitude of the average member of the British public was no doubt reflected at the recent BAE EGM, when not one voting shareholder spoke in support of the deal. Yours faithfully, N.J.D. BAPTISTE, 23 Gladwyn Road, Putney, SW15.

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

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CONSTRUCTION OF EL GHRASS DAM ON ZA RIVER INTERNATIONAL INVITATION FOR PRESELECTION OF TENDERERS

The Moroccan Ministry of Public Works Vocational and Staff Training calls for an international competition for preselection of tenderers for the construction of El Ghraass dam on the Za river. The site of El Ghraass dam is located at about 33km South-East of Taourirt city in the Province of Oujda.

The project consists of realizing the civil engineering work of an arch dam and a saddle embankment respectively 83m and 17.5m high above the bases of excavation. The works consists mainly of:

- 900.000m³ of excavations and filling.
- 215.000m³ of concrete.
- 80.000m³ of boreholes drilling.

This competition applies to civil construction companies. The companies will be in charge of the entire work with the ability to subcontract some of the specialized works such as boreholes drilling, grouting etc., to approved companies. The subcontractors will be bound by the methods prescribed in the Administration specifications document. Companies are invited to get the preselection documents setting the participation conditions from "Service des marches" of the Hydraulic Administration.

Requests for proposal documents are available on payment of one thousand five hundred Dirhams (1.500,000 DH) to the qualified departments of the Kingdom Treasury.

The companies will have to submit their responses along with a subscription request no later than April the 15th 1994 before 11.00 AM at the following address: ADMINISTRATION DE L'HYDRAULIQUE RUE HASSAN BENCHEKROUN - AGDAL RABAT - MOROCCO.

Buoyant Lex gets in the fast lane for growth

BY PHILIP PANGALOS

LEX Service, Britain's biggest car distribution and leasing group, drove underlying full-year pre-tax profits ahead by 30 per cent last year and unveiled plans to expand further this year, both organically and by acquisition.

As the recovery in the market for new and used cars continued, Lex increased its market share and maintained tight control of costs. Profits before fifth-quarter income from leasing associates (resulting from a change of year end) and exceptional items advanced to £38.5 million in the year to December 26, up from £28.3 million last time.

On an FR3 basis, profits dipped by £6.5 million, to £101.5 million, owing to a slight fall in the amount received from the sale of businesses. The results include a £60.1 million exceptional gain from the sale of Lex's stake in Arrow Electronics, while in 1992 there was a gain of £63.7 million on the disposal of the Volvo business.

Turnover grew by 29 per cent, to £1.18 billion.

Lex's 127 car and truck dealerships cover 30 manufacturers and sold a record 64,000 cars and 30,000 used vehicles during the year. The group acquired 36 Arlington dealerships from Unigate in

July and took control of the import franchise for Hyundai cars in September. New vehicle sales advanced by 30 per cent on a like-for-like basis, while used vehicles were ahead by 22 per cent. Lex now claims almost 4 per cent of the UK car market (2.9 per cent in 1992) and more than 5 per cent of truck sales.

Lex Vehicle Leasing saw its contract hire fleet grow by 5,000 vehicles, to almost 56,000, at the end of 1993. Improved margins, reduced overheads and healthier volumes combined to push pre-tax profits ahead to £26 million (£13.1 million).

Since the year end, Lex has become the sole importer of Komatsu forklift trucks into England and Wales. Sir Trevor Chinn, the chief executive, said 1994 had started well, with further growth in UK car and truck markets and improvements in market share.

A spokesman said Lex was still seeking acquisitions. The final dividend is raised to 7.8p (6.6p), giving an increased total of 12.5p (10.6p) for the year. Earnings dipped to 38.5p (36.7p) a share, while adjusted earnings climbed 45 per cent, to 26.4p (18.3p). Lex shares eased 6p to 524p.

Tempus, page 29



Bowthorpe boosts earnings

BY MARTIN BARROW

BOWTHORPE, the international electronics and electrical components group, announced a near 20 per cent increase in profits for 1993 and said the first two months of the current year showed healthy rises in sales and orders.

The company, with headquarters in Crawley, West Sussex, reported pre-tax profits up to £51.1 million from £42.6 million in 1992. Shareholders who backed a £64.4 million rights issue at the year-end, will get a final dividend of 5.03p a share,

making a total of 6.91p (6.36p) for the year. The shares rose 3p to 353p in early trading.

Turnover rose to £34.3 million (£26.4 million) with a £9.3 million contribution from newly-acquired businesses. Operating profits rose to £52.5 million (£42.2 million), with £2.1 million from new businesses and £5.3 million from exchange-rate movements.

John Westhead, chief executive, said management reports for the first two months of the current year showed useful rises in sales and orders,

although he said there continued to be pressure on margins.

Capital expenditure during the year rose to £22.7 million (£19.6 million). The company, which has grown steadily over the years through the acquisition of small and medium-sized businesses, spent a further £39.6 million on purchases during the year. At the year-end net debt was £41.5 million but this has been offset by cash from the rights issue, which was received in January. Earnings per share were 18.18p (15.26p).

Pair of cards: Don Lewin, left, chairman of Clinton Cards, and his son, Clinton Lewin, the managing director, masking their smiles at a 31 per cent profit rise for Britain's biggest specialist greeting card retailer. The opening of new stores, coupled with strict cost control, helped to lift pre-tax profits from £2.3 million to £3 million for the year to January 29, on sales up by 11 per cent from £80 million to £89.1 million. A final dividend of 3.11p brings the total for the year to 4.71p (4.25p), a rise of 11 per cent. The chairman said that consumer confidence was still fragile in view of worries about personal tax increases.

Weir profits trimmed by redundancy costs

REDUNDANCY costs at Weir Group ended the engineering company's ten-year unbroken run of profits growth. Yesterday, Weir announced pre-tax profits for the year to December 31 of £37.5 million, down from £39.2 million in the previous 12 months. Excluding redundancy costs of £2.4 million, Weir would have reported a small rise in profits, boosted by a first-time contribution of £1.2 million from Darchem, the engineering company acquired last August for £16 million.

Viscount Weir, chairman, said the group performed creditably given the continued tough trading conditions, which he said were expected to continue. "For the current year, competition is strong. We have become accustomed to it however, as a normal part of life." As a result, he said in the current year Weir should again produce satisfactory results. The final dividend was lifted from 4.15p a share to 4.57p, making a total for the year of 6.5p, up 0.6p.

Britannic tops £27m

BRITANNIC Assurance, the life assurance group, yesterday met City forecasts when it announced a 15 per cent rise in net profits from £23.7 million to £27.2 million, and a 14 per cent lift in final dividend to 8p from 7.7p, after adjusting for last year's capitalisation issue. Life business profits rose £2.9 million to £24.7 million, while the general insurance business returned to the black with a £310,000 profit (£205,000 loss), despite a transfer of £500,000 to the claims equalisation reserve.

Bernard Matthews soars

STRONG sales of branded added-value products and reduced competition from low-priced imports helped more than treble profits at Bernard Matthews, the poultry processor. Pre-tax profits rose from £3.4 million to £11.26 million for the year to January 2 on sales of £194.8 million (£144.2 million). A final dividend of 1.4p (1.25p) brings the total for the year to 2.5p (2.25p), an increase of 11 per cent. The market improved significantly during the year as sterling's devaluation held back the penetration of low-priced imports.

Twin gains for Whatman

ACQUISITIONS and exchange-rate gains helped boost 1993 profits at Whatman, the paper, filtration equipment and gas generator maker, by 10 per cent to £10.7 million (£9.7 million). Stripping out these factors, underlying growth was 5 per cent, slightly below expectations. The company said this was due largely to a slowdown in the US drugs industry and destocking by UK distributors. A 6.90p final makes a total of 10.20p (9.50p). Earnings per share rose from 27.7p to 30.76p.

More O'Ferrall recovers

BETTER trading, an end to losses from the US operation, now sold, and no repeat of provisions to cover that sale left More O'Ferrall, the display advertising contractor, with pre-tax profits of £7.76 million in 1993 (£220,000). A final dividend of 10p makes an unchanged total of 13.2p, this time covered by earnings per share of 16.5p. In 1992, the group took a £4.44 million provision to cover the closure of the US operation but £750,000 was not needed and has been added to 1993 profits.

ASPEN COMMS. (Fin)
Pre-tax: £157,000
EPS: 2.6p loss
Div: 2.9p, mkg 4.9p

Profit in previous year was £1.87 million and earnings were 8.6p. Profits again affected by charge against redundancy and bad debt

EX-LANDS (Int)
Pre-tax: £484,000
EPS: 0.88p (1.19p)
Div: Nil (nil)

Previous interim profits were £222,000. This year £418,000 profit was from the partial sale of a subsidiary

QUALITY SOFTWARE
Pre-tax: £553,000
EPS: 7.3p (20.8p)
Div: 1.25p

Final results. Profit in previous year was £1.2 million. Company was floated on stock market in March. Turnover was £13.3 million

BR. BLDG & ENG APPL
Pre-tax: £902,000
EPS: 5.4p (8.4p)
Div: 2.5p (2.5p)

Interim results. Comparable profit in previous year was £1.4 million. Turnover rose to £24.9 million from £20.95 million

CANNING (W.) (Fin)
Pre-tax: £2.2m (£2.4m)
EPS: 2.2p (0.9p)
Div: 4.35p, mkg 7.29p

Profits hit by bad debt provision of £1.4 million and exceptional charge of £1.06 million. Sales fell to £109.3 million from £114 million

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ACCOUNTANCY

Human touch vital in audits

By ROGER DAVIS

Two years ago, I wrote here about the state of the auditing profession. To restore public confidence, I argued for re-examination of the role of auditors and strengthening of their resolve in resisting bad company practice. It was important to avoid counterproductive structural measures.

If progress is measured by the thousands of words in discussion papers and standards from various bodies, we have done pretty well. Most are well directed, but there is a danger of taking our eye off the real ball of developing the inquisitive skills of auditors and their ability to make and assert professional judgments.

An audit is not like designing a jumbo jet, where failure of one part can mean catastrophe, and so each part needs a manual. Of course, our work needs technical underpinning, but auditing must never become an automated process. Human judgment is critical. A better analogy is with the pilot who watches the instruments and day-to-day commercial activity.

On strengthening auditors' resolve, signs are more encouraging. Directors, and audit committees in particular, are aware of heightened expectations post-Cadbury and are inviting greater challenge from auditors. This lets auditors reassert their authority.

Now back to my themes of

two years ago. The audit quarantining debate is not dead yet. As head of audit in a leading firm, I just say this: put me in a quarantine compound if you must, but the right people won't join me — good flight engineers perhaps, but not the captains with the critical senses upon whom the public ultimately relies.

On redefining the audit role, the Cadbury Code and the Auditing Practices Board's *Future of Audit* paper gave direction to greater auditor involvement in helping to prevent corporate incompetence and misdemeanour. The problem is that their intentions are becoming bureaucratised at a low level of guidance.

The draft guidance on internal control, though containing many helpful thoughts, is too detailed and technical for the boardroom. What is needed is for auditors to develop boardroom skills in advising on how to prevent the big surprise that can threaten a company's financial position or its reputation — not to dabble in day-to-day commercial activity.

On strengthening auditors' resolve, signs are more encouraging. Directors, and audit committees in particular, are aware of heightened expectations post-Cadbury and are inviting greater challenge from auditors. This lets auditors reassert their authority.

Now back to my themes of



Davis: auditors must fight bad company practice

that all public company boards are properly constructed, which is where we come to a potentially gaping hole. The Cadbury Committee stands down at the end of the year. The City cannot afford to allow standards of corporate governance to lapse again. We are

not talking of the majority — the well managed companies. It was not for them that the Cadbury Code was written. Can we, however, be sure that history will not repeat itself with a new generation of "entrepreneurs", with a new generation of financial design-

ers and legal Houdinis encouraging them to overreach themselves, with the auditor back in the wilderness? The Cadbury Committee was an excellent forum to bring together shared City interests in preventing a repeat. Something like it must remain.

Two years on, the end-of-term report on the auditor is: "Making progress — relies too much on his textbooks". What would I like to write about two years from now? It would be: ☐ Completion of most of what needs to be done to fill in major gaps in accounting and auditing standards so that something of a moratorium can be imposed, letting us concentrate on traditional values of auditing.

☐ An outcome on auditor liability that is fair to all. Potential litigation is a binding brake on the development of auditing. Without a solution, we will become a regressive profession, discouraging advice to boards in case lawyers get to know about it.

☐ Robust and permanent succession arrangements to the Cadbury Committee.

☐ A profession that has raised its game in challenges and advice provided at board level. On these foundations, I would like to see my profession having fully restored not only public confidence, but its own confidence, in itself.

Roger Davis is head of audit at Coopers & Lybrand

Disclose what you would rather not

There are many people who still carry the naive belief that if only companies disclosed what they were up to then shareholders and other users of accounts would have a greater understanding of what is going on with their investments. Those who are naive are usually people who do not run or control companies. Those who argue that disclosure should be curtailed invariably do run companies. At this point, any arguments should come to an end.

The fact that an argument over the issue of disclosure still rages through the financial reporting world shows how far the powers of persuasion still lie with those who control the information. The sad aspect of this is that those who control the publication of the information should be the forces of the Financial Reporting Council and its associates — not the miserly companies.

The whole sorry state of the debate was summed up recently at a meeting organised by the financial executives group within the English ICA's membership.

The debate it organised was ostensibly a simple one. "Disclosure in Company Accounts" was its title. The unfortunate point was that when it came to discussion from speakers in business or questions from the floor the underlying theme was not that disclosure was a motherhood concept but that it was to be regarded with enormous suspicion at all times.

So much so that even the mid-mannered Allan Cook from the Accounting Standards Board was reduced to a very obvious and straightforward view of accounting standards. After a series of attacks on the length and detail of the accounting standards being promulgated, he defended himself and the ASB very simply. He said all the verbiage could be cut away completely, and the whole programme of bringing sense to financial reporting could be reduced to one simple accounting standard. Furthermore that standard could be reduced to one short unequivocal line. It would read, he said: "Disclose anything you would rather not."

But the debate continues, with much in the way of pious statements from aggrieved finance directors who feel insulted that they should have to cope with questions about disclosure. Some argue that it is completely beyond them. Those at another recent day of debate saw the spectacle of a main board director of Marks & Spencer describing, at

one point in some detail, how the board were capable of ensuring that Marks would become the dominant global retailer in the next decade. Shortly afterwards, when questioned from the floor, he said the same board found the draft Cadbury proposals on internal control responsibilities far too complex and quite beyond them.

The same story was recently made plain in the English ICA's annual survey of UK reporting practice. "Financial Reporting 1993-94". It showed that a quarter of the country's largest companies failed to disclose their research and development spending. When researchers followed this up, several companies claimed that their accounting systems were such that they could not untangle research and development spending from other spending. Coming from a significant proportion of the top 300 UK companies, this seems weak to say the least.

We have been here before. The Institutional Shareholders' Committee tried a campaign to increase R&D disclosure but was mostly rebuffed by companies telling them that giving out such figures would provide competitors with an unfair advantage.

There is no doubt that disclosure can be, at best, a pain. You can only have sympathy for a head of audit at Ernst & Young. In the disclosure debate, E&Y's Ron Paterson put up a slide with just one figure on it. A huge "686" shone out across the hall. This, he said, was the number of disclosure requirements on the E&Y checklist which had to be worked through at every audit. You can see why some people loathe disclosure.

Allan Cook did point out that only about a third of such requirements stem from accounting requirements. The rest are either from the Companies Act or European Community directives. But that is no comfort. The problem is that of changing the culture surrounding disclosure. One idea from the other co-editor of the institute's survey might be worth following up. Len Skerratt said that he thought it "extremely strange that the Review Panel of the Financial Reporting Council can only look at accounts which are referred to it".

"Random selection by the review panel might well spur greater disclosure," he thought. It would also get boards of directors to take a rather more responsible attitude towards their shareholders' needs.



ROBERT BRUCE

When saving is a service

THERE is always room for an accountant. Paul Randon, a chartered accountant of 20 years' experience based in Bristol, has carved a niche showing companies how to trim excess costs — with quite a degree of success, it seems. As an associate of Expense Reduction Analysts UK, an offshoot of an American cost-cutting agency, he has helped the Bristol Chamber of Commerce and Initiative shave up to 25 per cent off its stationery

bill, and claims most companies have some excess fat to shed. He saved 29 per cent for a direct mailing house on stationery, computer and office consumables, an additional 12 per cent on insurance for an engineering company and more than 40 per cent on chemicals and cleaning for a service-station group. Randon is one of about 80 people in Britain making their living in this way, only charging for the service if savings are identified.

Sound like a growth industry...

Oil coup

A BIT of a coup for Ernst & Young, which has been brought in to provide audit services to BP Oil in Europe, thought to be one of the biggest and most complex examples of a leading company subcontracting a substantial portion of its internal audit workload. Ernst is working in

partnership with the in-house team on the appointment, which covers BP Oil's operations in 12 countries.

City joker

WHO said accountants find it hard to see the funny side? John Alexander, corporate recovery and insolvency partner at Pannell Kerr Forster, did a snap survey of excuses given to his clients for late payment of bills. They ranged from the

elusive ("I am no longer living at the address on the debt statement, and by the way, I have left the country") to the absurd ("I did post the cheque, but on the way home later I noticed the post office was on fire, so the cheque has probably burnt"). The best entry was judged to be from Karen Tubby, insolvency manager at Legal & General, who offered: "We can't pay you this week because the Queen is making a visit to the City and this is going to hold everything up." Full marks for trying.

JON ASHWORTH

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EMPLOYEE HEALTH

The taskforce gets tougher

Working at well-being

Employee health is still a low priority for too many companies

A small firm in Snowdonia, DMM Engineering, has provided its five-a-side football team with T-shirts and a ball. A knitwear factory in Leicester built a bicycle shed for £300 to encourage employees to cycle to work. Kellogg, the food giant, recently spent £30,000 on a fitness centre for staff.

These companies have taken positive steps to encourage their staff to adopt a healthier lifestyle. But statistics show that going to work can seriously damage your health. Last year more than two million people suffered from ill health caused by their job, with problems ranging from back injuries to stress.

In all, 350 million working days are lost in the UK each year through sickness, at a cost to British business of £13 billion annually, according to estimates from the Confederation of British Industry (CBI).

In every European country except Great Britain and Northern Ireland, employers are required by law to provide occupational health services. Ten years ago the House of Lords Select Committee on science and technology recommended that employers adopt a voluntary code of practice, but the notion has sunk without trace. Some larger organisations have their own occupational health departments, and some buy in a service, but 53 per cent of all employees, according to a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) report, are not covered by any measures.

Health and safety laws require employers to ensure that staff are not put at risk by their business operations, while insurance com-

panies increasingly require evidence that every reasonable precaution is taken to avoid damaging employees' health.

Throughout the 1980s companies were exhorted to invest in their people in order to gain competitive advantage. But all the effort put into training and development is wasted, John Cridland says, unless employees are fit for work.

"Human resource management has tackled pay, equal opportunities, training and employee involvement," explains Mr Cridland, environment director at the CBI, "but until recently occupational health has been the missing piece in the corporate jigsaw."

Despite the arguments in favour of prevention rather than cure, companies are tackling employee health on a piecemeal basis. An HSE survey showed that activity is unfocused, with little evidence of an overall health promotion strategy.

Effective health programmes do not need big budgets. DMM Engineering, which employs 90 people, spends £5,000 a year on staff health and recently won a CBI Wales/Health Promotion Authority award. "The company canteen has a choice of healthy foods as part of our programme," says chairman Richard Cuthbertson, "and nicotine patches are provided free to anyone trying to give up smoking. But staff probably did not realise that the company football team is also promoting good health. Often people need just a little encouragement, at minimal cost, to adopt a healthier lifestyle."

WIDGET FINN

The Government has ways of making us all healthier, says Widget Finn

In 1992 the Department of Health published "Health of the Nation", a White Paper which set out a long-term health strategy to improve life expectancy and quality of life. A taskforce on workplace health was established to promote the health of workers as an integral part of management practice.

The taskforce looked at what is currently being done in promoting workplace health, and made recommendations on future activities.

"We found that occupational health services still tend to concentrate on controlling factors which have an immediate effect on employees' health, while the more positive aspects of promoting health programmes receive little attention," says Dr Robert Smith, chairman of the Well-being Forum, an employer group set up to promote health programmes which was represented on the Workplace Taskforce.

There has been no dramatic growth in employee health programmes in recent years, according to Dr Alex Grievie, clinical director of BUPA health services.

"The White Paper encapsulated what was already being done by conscientious employers who regularly upgrade their provision," says Dr Grievie, "but since its publication there has been no rush to start by companies who weren't active before."

Around 40 per cent of workplaces have some sort of health education information available, although often it consists of a poster or leaflet which have little effect.

Sarah Veale, the TUC representative on the Workplace Taskforce, says health promotion is mainly limited to larger companies with an



Dr Robert Smith in the Glaxo gym, set up at the request of the staff, and which then had to be doubled in size to meet employee demand

occupational health service.

"Ways have to be found to encourage the spread of health programmes in smaller companies by demonstrating the potential benefits, such as reduced sickness absence and increased productivity," says Ms Veale. "We realise that it's often difficult just keeping up with the minimum health and safety regulations."

Ninety-six per cent of all UK companies employ fewer than 20 people — and most small businesses are too busy worrying about survival to think about long-term health benefits. Alan Kingwell is managing director of Martlets Machinery, a Hampshire-based sales engineering company with 15 full-time staff. Employee health is not high on his list of priorities, he

admits. Providing stable jobs in a recession leaves no surplus to spend on what he sees as employee enhancement.

Small businesses will have to undergo a cultural change to involve their employees in health promotion, according to Joanna Chapman-Andrews, a health promotion specialist who co-ordinates the Winchester Workplace Health Advisory Group.

The group is a pilot project set up at the suggestion of the Taskforce to establish "healthy alliances" of key local organisations which would provide advice and information to small companies. Members include representatives of the city council, the local authority, the health commission and the chamber of commerce. Sharing the cost of health

programmes can make them more accessible to smaller companies. Occupational health centres have been established on industrial estates in Harlow, Essex, and Slough, Buckinghamshire, since as long ago as the 1950s.

The Workplace Taskforce estimated that the NHS, which employs 154 occupational health doctors and 640 nurses, could provide services to local businesses near its hospitals.

The NHS, the largest employer in Europe, was exhorted by the Taskforce to lead by example in its provision of employee health programmes. Initiatives in Wessex Region NHS include a staff support scheme in Swindon with a stress helpline manned by trained counsellors, a training pack on manual handling

which Dorset NHS Trust is selling to other agencies, jogging "trim-trails" marked around hospital sites, and staff discounts at leisure centres.

There is no shortage of resources available to help employers build up a health promotion programme. Information on everything from blood pressure control to lifestyle assessment is readily available. But even companies which are spending large sums on a wellness programme tend to assemble it without a cohesive plan.

Dr Doreen Miller, a consultant occupational physician, says: "They bring in a 'Look after your heart' team or install an expensive fitness suite without first finding out what the

company's health needs are.

"It's vital for a company to carry out a health audit, and draw up an action plan which puts health on the business agenda as an integral part of the budget. Employers must build evaluation into their health programmes to establish the business benefit."

Any company planning an employee health programme should adopt the fashionable practice of empowerment, says Dr Smith. Ensure your employees' support by providing what they want. Employees of Glaxo Research, where he is consultant in pharmaceutical medicine, suggested a fitness centre. Take-up was so high — a fifth of the 3,700 staff use it regularly — that the centre has had to be doubled in size.

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Healthlinx is the independent health initiative developed by BMI Healthcare and Private Patients Plan (PPP).

*Heart Screen not recommended for people over the age of 70

Fit and well to compete

A national contest is being held to boost health promotion

To add impetus to the drive to improve the health and well-being of working people in Britain, a working for health award has been launched by leading UK companies. A national competition will mark out the country's healthiest company, and the three best runners-up will also be chosen.

The PPP/Wellness Forum Working for Health Award — named for its two main backers — will be presented by Baroness Cumberlege, the minister for health, in central London on April 21.

PPP, Britain's second biggest medical insurer, will provide the bronze award trophy, and the competition is being organised by the Wellness Forum, a charitable grouping of companies promoting health in the workplace. The Forum is a member of the Government's Health of the Nation steering group, set up to promote health in companies throughout the UK.

Dr Robert Smith, the Forum chairman, who is involved in medical research at Glaxo, the pharmaceuticals giant, says: "We want to find the company that is best promoting the concept of well-being among its staff and its board."

"There are many benefits to be gained by implementing wellness programmes, such as reduced sick leave and increased motivation. The award will be a tribute to the staff and management of an organisation."

Andrew Randall, PPP's corporate division general manager, says that PPP backed the initiative because it is encouraging UK employers to help employees to improve their health. He adds: "Better morale, lower absenteeism and staff retention are just some of the benefits of wellness programmes."

Because the Forum is backed by individual companies, organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry are not involved, but the CBI's director of environmental affairs, John Cridland, welcomes the award initiative. He says: "We need to keep business healthy. In the UK, 80 million working days a year are lost because of



Baroness Cumberlege

stress-related problems. Sickness absence costs UK business £13 billion a year."

Entering the competition has meant answering searching questions about company strategy to secure optimum physical and mental health for staff. The extent of a company's initiatives are explored and how far they impact on personnel at the various levels of the business.

Initiatives can involve issues such as diet promotion and the provision of stress counselling, breast screening or blood-pressure monitoring. A judging panel, consisting of Frank Sharpe (the Iford company), Jean Raper (Sheffield Council), John Renouen (Redland), Dr Jonathan Royds-Jones (Duracell), Dr Harry McNeilly (PPP), Ewan McDonald (Glasgow University) and Dr Smith, the Forum chairman, is now at work.

DEREK HARRIS

Forum for self-help

Wellness Forum, whose original seven backers have already increased to 26 leading businesses and organisations since it was launched last October by Virginia Bottomley, the Health Secretary, is planning to increase membership to 50, Derek Harris writes.

The expansion will aim at securing membership with an even geographical spread as well as ensuring representation of as many of the key sectors of industry and commerce as possible.

The Forum's founder members were Marks & Spencer, Grand Metropolitan, J. Sainsbury, Glaxo in pharmaceuticals, the Institute of Personnel Management, the English National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting, and the Health and Safety Executive.

The line-up of backers quickly grew to include leading companies such as British Coal, BT, IBM, National Power, Nestlé (UK), Polaroid, Redland Technologies (part of the Redland group), Smith-Kline Beecham and Whitbread. Additionally came W.H. Smith, Thomas Cook, Prudential Corporation, Girdbank and Kleinwort Benson, in merchant banking. Other organisations which joined the Forum were Royal Mail, the Industrial Orthopaedic Society, Sheffield City Council, Oxford Regional Health Authority and the Southport and Rumbly NHS Trust.

Two big names in motor manufacturing are expected shortly to become members. The Forum was formed after a conference in 1991. Discussion had centred on creating a proactive health care programme and those involved included board directors, occupational health directors, health specialists and politicians. They wanted to bring together like-minded individuals who primarily

A holistic approach to good health among staff is spreading

would be representing employers with the common interest of maintaining good health among employees through preventative measures. The proposal was to pool ideas for promoting health care of employees, and explore how business and government could work together to improve knowledge.

In the United States, several city-based practical, self-help wellness forums have been created by large employers.

Improving lifestyles can yield benefits by cutting absenteeism

Dr Robert Smith, who is part of Glaxo's medical research directorate and chairman of the Wellness Forum, said: "The American initiatives sprang from their extreme cost pressures, which did not apply in Britain. But after that watershed conference British companies recognised they could help their employees and their families improve their lifestyles and prevent illness to yield benefits to the company by cutting absenteeism and other problems."

Subsidiaries of American companies already committed to health policies played a key role in importing the idea in

Britain of a holistic approach to promoting the good health of workers. As Western companies set up operations in Eastern Europe, the health care policies could spread.

Dr Smith said: "Under the Communist regime health care for workers and their families were centred on the factory. This system is in the process of changing as Western-style general practitioner surgeries are developing." He believes the ideal outcome in Eastern Europe would be the retention of the best of the factory-based and general practice-based systems running in parallel.

The challenge is to establish the best practice for wellness initiatives, Dr Smith believes. "There is recognition that there is a lot of stress within working communities, so companies provide stress counselling, with managers taught how to recognise the symptoms. But perhaps you also need to offer help with financial and legal problems because they may account for a lot of the stress."

He said: "We can aim to improve people's lifestyles but then how do you measure the benefits of such changes? Probably an increased loyalty to a company and less turnover of staff is one answer."

One question is whether the Forum should grow beyond a membership of 50 or so once the main sectors of industry and commerce are covered. One approach would be for the Forum to lay down guidelines on best practice and leave local wellness groups to recruit companies and organisations. As more training and enterprise councils (Tecs) and chambers of commerce merge their activities, one possibility is that wellness promotion could be channelled through such organisations. Dr Smith said: "We need to think of the best way to achieve integration so there is consistency, without stifling local initiative."

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Managed care curbs the costs

Providing free medical insurance can be expensive.
Derek Harris looks at ways to keep premiums down

Almost four million employees, from top executives to office and shop floor workers, now enjoy private health care at a charge, thanks to medical insurance. This is out of a total private medical insurance market accounting for about 6.4 million people altogether.

Businesses expect to reap two types of reward from medical insurance. First, they should cut down on problems, which should lead to less absenteeism and greater productivity. Second, it is a tax-effective way to attract staff loyalty and motivation.

The strong appeal of medical insurance schemes for companies can thus readily be understood, but one problem is that premiums have been rising fast. This is partly due to general inflation, especially of medical costs, which tend to run noticeably ahead of rises in the retail price index. High claim rates have also played their part.

Leading medical insurers have been responding by bringing in managed care schemes. These aim to control costs more closely while maintaining the quality of the health care provided.

The pioneer of this approach in Britain has been PPP, which went into managed care in 1989. PPP is the second largest private medical insurer, with just under 30 per cent market share (by far the biggest insurer being BUPA, with more than a 40 per cent share). Norwich Union Healthcare and WPA are the two other big medical insurers.

The managed care approach can usually achieve savings of between 10 and 15 per cent, according to Dr Sandy Scott, managing director of PPP's medical managed healthcare division. PPP's regimen at a firm of London accountants once produced savings of 45 per cent, but

more typical was a 14 per cent initial year saving at Pilkington, the glass makers, which was held for three years until cost inflation finally fed through.

Dr Scott said: "The lesson is that unit costs can be controlled but the incidence of claims cannot." He added: "We save 20,000 under managed care, but in what was essentially a year of rising costs, we now have a 20,000 increase by the end of this year."

Back injury is the largest cause of work-related illness and the most common reason for early retirement.

panies with a pricing about 15 per cent lower, the result of using a specially selected network of 43 hospitals. Alan Ainsworth, BUPA membership marketing director, said: "It should encourage companies to provide cover for more employees and to make it attractive for smaller companies to provide cover for staff."

Norwich Union Healthcare, part of the Norwich Union insurance group, brought in a managed care scheme 18 months ago that offers a variety of ways of controlling costs. For example, a company can direct its employees to hospitals where discounts have been negotiated or a "preferred provider" relationship can be set up. This involves having care plans agreed specifically with specialists and hospitals.

Management information can also regularly be fed to companies so they can monitor how their scheme is performing on costs. It means that a company can take early action further to control its costs if it wishes to do so.

Dr Chris Brown, business manager for Norwich Union Healthcare, said of the scheme: "Cost and quality management go hand in hand. For example, patients undergoing a hysterectomy can be in hospital for between six and nine days. There is no proven clinical benefit for the extra days spent in hospital. Where cases like this are managed, savings of up to 15 per cent can be made."

Norwich's Healthcare, founded in 1990, claims already to be the third biggest private medical insurer, with an 8 per cent share of the market.



An employee undergoing heart stress testing on a treadmill to detect any coronary artery disease, as part of a company health screening plan

Cutting down on stress

Heat, noise and poor organisation can all pile on workplace pressure.
Now employers are to get guidance

Employers will soon be able to take advantage of practical guidance to identify and tackle occupational stress, Derek Harris writes. Previous research on occupational stress has sometimes been contradictory, at other times inconclusive. Now the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), the executive arm of the Health & Safety Commission (HSC), is working on a guide for employers, due out later this year.

It will not be prescriptive, nor will it lay down complex procedures. Instead, it will emphasise a practical and preventative approach to stress management.

Dr Paul Davies, HSE's senior health policy official at HSE, says: "We believe this report provides a sound base of knowledge, on which all can

support from management, as well as inflexible or over-demanding work schedules.

What is needed, it says, is a systematic and problem-solving approach. Employers should assess risks, then take practical steps to remove or minimise them. It means applying the same approach to stress as to other workplace hazards. Occupational stress is not a reportable illness but it should, the report suggests, be formally recognised as a health and safety issue.

Other factors that can cause problems include lack of control over pacing of work, excessive periods of repetitive or monotonous work and uncertainty linked to constant change. Indicated too are management shortcomings like the lack of clear objectives and

such stress. A number of factors in the workplace are now commonly agreed to have the potential to cause stress, the report says. These include not just physical elements such as heat and noise but pressure caused by the way in which work is organised and managed.

Separately, the HSE has been scrutinising more than 400 pieces of health and safety legislation to see whether they are still necessary or need some changes. Its report is due to go to the HSC by the end of this month. Alterations but no big changes are likely to be suggested.

There's no healthier competition.

The first annual PPP/Wellness Forum Working for Health Award will be made on April 21st to the company that has done the most to promote the concept of wellness among its workforce, as well as running an innovative wellness programme. This award is, appropriately enough, sponsored by PPP.

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MUSIC page 38

Russia's foremost composer, Alfred Schnittke, is celebrated in a London festival

ARTS

THEATRE page 39

Hot Shoe Shuffle: an explosion of Australian dance energy hits the West End stage



CINEMA: Being an adult, Geoff Brown finds little worth going back for in the sequels *Sister Act 2* and *Beethoven's 2nd*

Remaking Whoopi is a nasty habit

Déjà viewing

Not all second bites at the cherry are fruitless

Eight years ago, a walk by Times Square plunged me into a waking nightmare. I gazed up at a multiplex cinema marquee and saw the titles *Pollux 2*, *Psycho 3*, *Nightmare on Elm Street 2* and, the crowning glory, *Friday the 13th VI*. Friends tell me I have still not recovered. Though sequel-mania has abated since then, Hollywood still cannot stop squeezing extra films out of its successes (see story, right). This week brings two examples. *Sister Act* was endearing, but it needed no sequel; one session with Whoopi Goldberg whooping things up in a nun's habit was sufficient. No matter. Fat box-office returns dictated a sequel, so along comes *Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit*. It is dreadful.

Unable to lean on the novelty of rock 'n' rolling nuns, the directors offer a dull civics lesson for inner city kids. Goldberg's character is lured from Las Vegas to help her convent chums teach rowdy high school classes. "If you don't have an education, you don't have anything," she says. Bromides, however, are a poor substitute for good jokes.

The film dabbles unmercifully. After 45 footling minutes Goldberg exclaims: "I'm going to turn you guys into a choir!" At the one-hour mark she is teaching them scales. But the music cannot match the original for toe-tapping vim, and returning characters like Maggie Smith's Mother Superior and Kathy Najimy's cheery Sister are never given the space to make a strong impression.

Bill Duke, the director, clearly believes in his pastoral mission. Why else would he spend so much time on the sub-plot about Rita, a deafblind girl nudged out of her mire by reading Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*? But his efforts fall horribly flat, and audiences who enjoyed the fun of *Sister*

Act will scarcely hurry back for a sermon. "Beethoven wrote nine symphonies. This may be only the beginning," warns the co-producer of *Beethoven's 2nd*. Since the first film earned \$143 million, one sequel at least was inevitable.

The basic recipe stays the same: you mix one slobbering bulk with a squeaky-clean family, and watch the fur fly. In lieu of any other bright ideas, the sequel's writer, Len Blum, simply multiplies the dog by six. So alongside Beethoven there now stand his lady friend Missy and a puppy quartet called Dolly, Chubby, Mo and Tchaikovsky.

But numerical superiority does not necessarily bring happiness. Once the four puppies have looked cute and piddled, there is not much left in their acting repertoire. And

Beethoven himself has little to do. As for the story, a lady in red with dollar signs for eyes (Debi Mazar) plots with dimwitted Chris Penn to take control of Missy and pups. At the same time, the family's eldest daughter reaches the boyfriend-attracting age. The climax unfolds at a mountainous national park, where all the characters

spend their holidays at the same time. In the midst of this innocuous tomfoolery, Charles Grodin repeats his amusing performance as the harassed father, facing assaults on his manhood with open-mouthed stares or aggrieved shouts of "Aaahh!". The rest of the humans are sit-com creations, but at least Nicholle Tom and Christopher Castile, as the two eldest offspring, keep toe-curling antics to a minimum. Rod Daniel directs with dull efficiency, but this is really dog handler Karl Lewis Miller's show. The simple slapstick should get a response from small children. Parents, by and large, should take an anaesthetic.

Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit

Odeon Leicester Square
PG, 107 mins
Rash, preachy sequel to a one-off hit

Beethoven's 2nd
Plaza, U, 89 mins
Bland family fun with six St Bernard dogs

Daens
MGM Haymarket
15, 134 mins
Worthy Belgian priest champions the workers

The Aristocats
MGM Trocadero
U, 79 mins
Disney's Easter revival



Whoopi Goldberg struts her stuff in the cause of a brighter tomorrow for all our children in the proselytising *Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit*

Or, of course, they could park the children and slope off to Daens: two and a quarter hours of workers' shawls, drab cobbled streets, and Belgian religious politics. The experience may sound daunting, but Stijn Coninx's epic, nominated for one of last year's Best Foreign Language Film Oscars, never becomes the bottom-shifting bore you might suppose.

The actors must take much of the credit for pulling us through this bleak story, based on real events, about factory conditions in the 1890s and one priest's fight for workers' justice.

The Belgian troupe have no marquee value abroad, but their faces match their characters. You believe in Jan Decleir as the humanist Adolf Daens, curly hair sweeping out wild-

ly, taking his fight to the Belgian parliament and the Vatican of Pope Leo XIII. You believe in Anje de Boeck as Nette, the young worker who spurs Daens into action; or Gerard Desbarthe as the reactionary politician Charles Woerster, sneering and pulling strings behind the scenes.

Plunging into drama after several popular comedies, Coninx never tries for fancy visuals, preferring to suggest the social divide through decor and props. The Church and aristocracy enjoy velvet, reds, and strawberry tart; the trodder upon poor suffer dull browns and greys, plus potatoes.

Some of Coninx's narrative footwork could be more deft: the romance between Nette and a Socialist firebrand tastes like a Hollywood sugar plum. But Decleir's rounded portra-

al of a principled man struggling to do the right thing keeps the film on track for a modest victory.

With Easter looming, the Disney folk have dipped into their warehouse and fetched out *The Aristocats*, from 1970. This was the studio's first cartoon feature to emerge without Walt Disney's guiding hand, which may explain some of the artistic flaws.

Supporting characters in this period tale of high-society pussies are buried at the screen: they do their bit, then disappear, as though starting in a two-reeler. And the film needs a stronger villain; Edgar the butler, who kidnaps three hearse cats from his mistress's Paris mansion, is worth no one's hisses.

The film's audience appeal

is curiously lop-sided. The kittens, chubby enough to be pigs, are designed to get young hearts thumping; while Phil Harris, the voice of O'Malley the alley cat, works hard to cap his crowd-pleasing role in *The Jungle Book*. But so much effort and emphasis is spent on suggesting the place and time (1910) through art nouveau Metro signs, glimpses of Notre Dame, and interior decor: details destined to sail over tots' heads.

In one respect this pleasant but less than classic film serves as a handy litmus test for the Easter hole. If your children ask why the kittens have such strong American accents while their mother, voiced by Eva Gabor, is an European, you'll know they have reached maturity.

The Foster's Australian Film Festival, a week-long jamboree of recent films, begins at the Barbican, then tours around England, from Oxford (mid-April) to Norwich (early July), with one stop in Edinburgh (end of April).

The programme gathers various features still awaiting commercial release, though in some venues *The Piano*, *Strictly Ballroom* and others may appear for old time's sake. From the newer entries, Tracy Moffatt's *Bedevil* is a striking ghost story trilogy that finally suffers from being too clever by half; while Kevin Lucas's *Black River*, based on the Sydney Metropolitan Opera Company production, successfully fuses music-theatre and cinema in a passionate drama awash with Aboriginal culture.

Two tedious movie sequels released in one week make a bad advertisement for the genre. Geoff Brown writes. But the history of sequels is scarcely all negative. Cinema's bubble-balls in the 1930s and 1940s would not have survived without the endearing low-budget series featuring master sleuths from Sherlock Holmes to Charlie Chan, or fanciful cowboys like Hopalong Cassidy.

There were the *Broadway Melodies* of various years, the numerous chronicles of Andy Hardy's family, of Dr Kildare, or the Thin Man. Jump to the 1960s, and you get James Bond, tangling in film after film with a changing bevy of blondes, villains and gadgets.

There is a world of difference, however, between a Charlie Chan sequel and a *Sister Act 2*. Old-time sequels were modest affairs that took a set character and sent them off on separate, self-contained adventures. More often than not, today's sequels duplicate a formula more than a character, and tend to produce bad carbon copies of the original.

Exceptions to the rule do exist. *Lethal Weapon 2* improved on its predecessor by strengthening the characters, injecting extra humour, and throwing Joe Pesci's unctuous accountant in between the star players, volatile cop Mel Gibson and home-loving sidekick Danny Glover.

Die Hard 2, if not superior to the original, kept up a happy barrage of visceral thrills and assorted in-jokes. "I can't believe this," Bruce Willis cried, battling with terrorists once again. "Another Christmas. Another basement. Another elevator. How can this happen to the same guy twice?"

Even if you produce an appendage to a certified classic, disaster is not automatically guaranteed. Look at *Psycho II*, made 23 years after Hitchcock's shocker. Before its release film buffs worldwide polished up their insults, only to find that Richard Franklin's film had imagination, wit, genuine suspense, and a droll repeat performance from Anthony Perkins. Still, the insults were not wasted: the second *Psycho* sequel, three years later, was terrible.

When, in 1988, retirement loomed for the Tate Gallery's director Sir Alan Bowness, he looked forward to a life of fulltime writing. His wife Sarah is the daughter of Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson, one of the triplets whose birth in October 1934 astounded their utterly unprepared parents. So Bowness was an obvious choice to write Hepworth's authorised biography, and he wanted above all to tackle this long-cherished project after leaving the Tate.

But Henry Moore's widow Irina had a very different idea. She asked Bowness, who had known her husband since taking over the editorship of his complete sculpture catalogue in the 1960s, to become the first director of the Henry Moore Foundation. Bowness knew that "she was his best critic", and happily accepted the job.

Earlier, in 1984, he had been invited to become a trustee of the foundation; at first he was unwilling: "As director of the Tate, I would be coming to the foundation for money, and sensed a possible conflict of interest." But Irina Moore prevailed, and he became the most active of the trustees, starting the £1 million-a-year donations programme.

By the time he became the foundation's director in 1988, though, Bowness realised that he might soon have a very unpleasant fight on his hands. Moore had died two years before, and his daughter, Mary Danowski, was threatening litigation over the will. Her claim, eventually launched by a court summons in 1991, was aimed at forcing the foundation to hand over all the artist's copies of sculpture, and any other unsold sculptures, along with all his drawings and prints created since 1977.

Had she won, no fewer than 350 of the 700 Moore sculptures owned by the foundation would have been handed over to his daughter. They alone had an insurance value of £60 million. But she also claimed 1,400 drawings and 3,500 prints. In addition, Danowski claimed ownership of the 4,200 remaining sale copies of Moore's graphics.

In the event, the claims were legally rejected last December. Bowness has now been able to retire in his 66th year, knowing that the foundation had won a decisive victory. "It was

Happy to spend Moore time with his in-laws

Sir Alan Bowness looks back on his achievements with the Henry Moore Foundation, and forward to some serious writing



Sir Alan Bowness has plenty to fill any possible holes in his life as he enters his second retirement

very sad," he says. "I had hoped, when I took over the foundation, that I could work with her."

Speaking at a party held in his honour at the National Gallery recently, he pointed at Bassano's painting of Christ carrying the Cross and wryly commented: "I have, at times, felt that I was struggling with a similar burden." For Bowness lost his earlier legal battle with Moore's daughter over his attempt to erect "proper buildings for sculpture, drawings and the reception of visitors" at Perry Green in Hertfordshire, Moore's old home and the foundation's present headquarters. "I

feel frustrated about not providing them," he says. "They're necessary for the future, and I hope that my successor, Tim Llewellyn, will at least be able to carry forward the plan for a study centre. It's very difficult for anyone working on Moore to gain proper access to the foundation's unique library and archives."

Llewellyn, the 46-year-old deputy chairman of Sotheby's, is a surprise appointment. An Old Master expert, he has specialised in a period far removed from Bowness's involvement with 20th-century art. Under Bowness's innovative leadership, the foundation has become vigorously

committed to supporting contemporary sculptures. The Henry Moore Sculpture Trust, which Bowness founded in 1988, has done an enormous amount to further public contact with and understanding of their work. The focus has been Leeds, and he looks back on the projects initiated there "with unalloyed pleasure". Leeds, the city in which Moore studied art in 1919, now boasts the Henry Moore Institute. In a custom-built, granite-fronted building next to the City Art Gallery, a stimulating variety of exhibitions is held in airy rooms. Upstairs, the study centre, with its specialist library and video

facilities, is open to the public. But the institute's lively director, Robert Hopper, also runs an adventurous programme in the Henry Moore Studio at Dean Clough in Halifax. There, sculptors from across the world make and display their work.

Bowness delights in the fact that all this happens many miles from London. His regional sympathies may derive from his father, a Cumbrian school teacher who came down south. Bowness tried hard, while he was director at the Tate, to spread out Britain's notoriously centralised culture. "I believe in accessibility," he says, "and always thought it wrong that the Tate should just be in London. The Liverpool Tate was my idea, and I'm very pleased with the way it's gone."

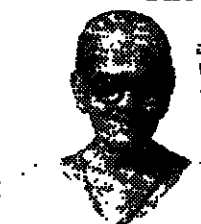
Not that popularity is something he automatically seeks. Although gentle and soft-spoken, once a contentious objector and still a devoted music-lover, Bowness has a taste for boldness. He was responsible for setting up the bitterly controversial Turner Prize. "Flak doesn't worry me," he says. "If the attention is antagonistic, one has to accept it. I regard the Turner Prize as a success; none of the other prizes set up since have taken risks in the way we did."

Bowness is determined now to finish the long-delayed biography of his mother-in-law by the end of this year. Over lunch, he and his wife explain how difficult it was for Hepworth to cope with the conflicting demands of maternity and art after the triplets were born. But Hepworth was adamant about continuing her own work. In sturdy defiance of the widespread notion that sculpture was a male preserve. Since her tragic death in a fire in 1975, the example set by both Hepworth and Moore has inspired subsequent generations of British sculptors to aim for the highest international standards. "British sculpture in the 20th century has been the best in the world," Bowness says. "Nobody has done more to nurture, disseminate and enhance our appreciation of this unexpected renaissance than him."

RICHARD CORK

● The next exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds is the first British show by Sigmund Freud, the Romanian pioneer of installation sculpture (March 30-June 11)

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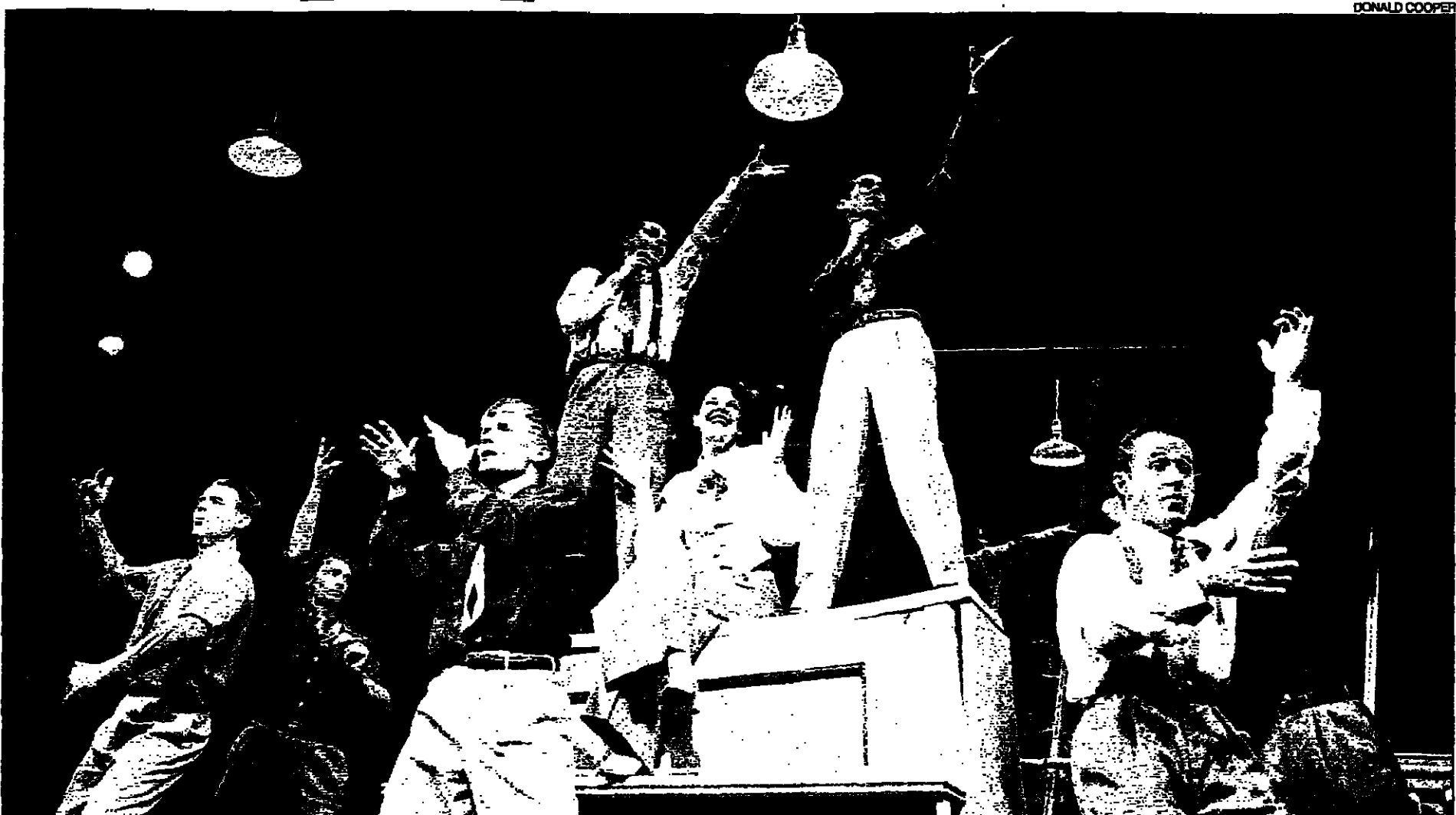
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Tiptop tap turns out a treat



'Everywhere feet seem to be pounding, crackling, rippling or fluttering in imitation of everything from castanets to Scottish streams': the cast of *Hot Shoe Shuffle* in full flow

Disney's seven dwarfs would make pretty problematic dinner guests. I mean, how many of us have that many high-chairs? Nor would I wish to entertain the Five Guys Named Moe, fond as they are of jumping in and out of radio sets while singing antique jazz numbers. But either bunch would be a cinch compared with the septet currently on show in the initially absurd, finally delightful Australian musical that has come banging and clattering into the Queen's.

The Brothers Tap, as they call themselves, come as a job lot. They travel in a gaudy phalanx of mauve, red and yellow suits and seem unable to tolerate even a minute or two apart. They also find it difficult to talk except in electronically amplified shouts or to perform simple acts without turning them into dances. Give them a front door and, where others would politely enter it, they bounce and somersault through like hyperthyroid cut-outs or Looney Tunes berserkers. The clinical diagnosis would probably be juvenile dementia.

Given their considerable physical

Never mind the plot (there isn't much), just feel the energy.
Benedict Nightingale reviews a vibrant musical from Australia

strengths and even greater mental limitations, a simple plot is to be expected: and that is what Larry Buttrose and Kathryn Riding provide. A lawyer summons all seven boys to his New York office—Spring, Slap, Buck, Tip, Tap, Wing and Slide, if you want the names—and tells them their missing father has bequeathed them \$2,500,000. Their response is characteristic. They leap onto the fake-mahogany table and do a triumphant dance, oblivious of the testator's conditions.

These are two. They must learn a hot shoe shuffle complex enough to be worthy of the old boy's memory. They must also absorb into their routine the skills of April, the sister they never knew they had. Since these Times Square dervishes seem as incapable of shuffling as Ian Paisley of whispering, and the girl looks as graceful as the great auk she somewhat resembles, there are clearly a few problems ahead. Are these duly overcome? Don't ask silly questions. The first act is the weaker and is

Hot Shoe Shuffle Queen's

louder. The Taps rush round the kindergarten furniture—pink piano, curly lamp-post, cartoon Manhattan skyline—practising dances, quarrelling, getting drunk, and belting out badly-mixed numbers by Gershwin, Ellington and others. Even a group hangerover, which one had hoped might subdue them a bit, does not prevent them hopping on and off a chair like circus lions on speed. It is the second act, and really only the second act, that justifies bringing the show from one end of the Earth to the other.

There is a tiny twist which I shall forebear from revealing since, feeble though it is, it is the nearest the plot will come to surprising anybody in the audience. But then all becomes cheerfully predictable. Rhonda Burchmore's lanky April turns out to be a trouper after all, and is

reconciled with her balking twin brother, David Atkins's Spring. And they and everybody else launch into 30-odd minutes of song-and-dance: song that, either because the sound men had turned down the decibels or because my eardrums had already been ruined, I found easier to absorb, and dance that struck me as increasingly fine.

At this point I had better declare myself. I am, and have always been, a sucker for tap. The recent London revival of *42nd Street*, for instance, was not all that good; but I succumbed to it from the moment the curtain quartered on all those chirruping toes and chattering heels. Tap symbolises what's best about America and, on the evidence here, of Australia too: an energy, a resilience, even an optimism.

Certainly, it is a splendid antidote to negative emotions, to European habits of fatalism and resignation, maybe even to rancour and despair.

If Hamlet or Timon of Athens had only had the right footwear, he could have clicked his troubles out of his system. And talking of Ian Paisley—how very differently his recent encounter with the PM might have gone if the Cabinet secretary had only come in at a key moment with two pairs of metal-bottomed pumps and a record of Irving Berlin's "Puttin' on the Ritz".

That is, as it happens, the number that leads into a stunning solo by one of the few Taps the overmiked babble had allowed me to identify, Dein Perry's Slap. But everywhere feet seem to be pounding, crackling, rippling or fluttering in imitation of everything from machine-guns to castanets to Scottish streams. It all ends with the seven brothers treating a row of purple-and-cream stools the way electric printers treat paper; but it was exuberantly done as well as very slick.

By now the plot is quite, quite forgotten—and who cares? It always counted for as little as that of *Five Guys Named Moe*. Go to the Queen's for the bits from the knees down, not those from the chin up. You are unlikely to see so much and so concentrated tap-dancing again.

Steps away from death

The Bosnian city of East Mostar may be under siege, but its artistic life is reviving, writes Tim Judah

Tremulous Peruvian flute music followed by an Albanian coffee-pot dance, performed in a foreign provincial theatre: this would not generally rate a mention in these pages. But this show was in besieged East Mostar. Half a mile away from Studio 64 a corpse, or rather a clothed skeleton, lies in the city's main road. It cannot be retrieved because of snipers. East Mostar has seen the dance of death, but its dancers refuse to put their shoes away.

Camarad used to be Mostar's world-touring dance troupe. "It means friend in Esperanto," explains director Kemal Dedovic. It specialised in the folk dances of Yugoslavia and 58 other countries. "We used to be sponsored by foreign embassies," says Dedovic, "but this year they don't exist anymore."

For two hours one could almost forget the bizarre situation

accompaniment of: "I am a Mostar girl... I have three suitors... I will marry the fourth."

As the girls rush to slip into their next costume, burly soldiers crowded at the side nudge each other. They may not have seats, but they do get a prime view of the changing room. The girls burst back to do the Charleston while the men prepare for a stomping, knife-thrusting, girl-spinning gypsy dance.

Any thought of an interval drink can be quickly dismissed. Families of the displaced, those whose houses

have been destroyed in the shelling, or who have been ethnically cleansed are living in the theatre café.

For more than three weeks the city has been quiet because of the ceasefire. Crowds throng streets which were ruled by snipers. But this

show was strictly for the in-crowd: a political and military *Who's Who* of East Mostar. Pointed morale-boosting references are made between the dances to the "genocide, uricide and ethnocide" visited upon East Mostar. All over Bosnia a glimmer of the arts has survived. But a political message is nearly always present.

Despite the nightmare of life under siege, Camarad has been able to put together a show. It has also found young new dancers to replace those who have fled, and has managed to inveigle the theatre from the army for one night. Because of the military use, the building has that most treasured of machines in dark East Mostar: an electrical generator to power the lights and speakers.

For two hours one could almost forget the bizarre circumstances of the show. In delicately embroidered Ottoman-era costumes a slow old Mostar dance is performed to the warbling

Camarad claims it is a repository of all Bosnian national dances. But these Turkish-era delights only make reference to one of the three. Bosnian nations, the Muslims, Kemal Dedovic says that Serbs, Croats and Muslims always lived together in Mostar and "we want it to be that way again". On the other hand, Dedovic also said that in that Saturday performance he had "no time" for the other dances. In the last few days, United Nations forces have come to look at the skeleton, with a view to taking it away. Perhaps next year Camarad will have more time.

Hilary Finch sits in on a series of masterclasses for young musicians filmed by the BBC

Lessons in entertainment

Masterclasses have come a long way since Elisabeth Schwarzkopf struck terror into her singing victims, dissecting minute fragments of a musical phrase in a darkened room to an audience of eager Lieder voyeurs. Now, nearly every festival, lest it be thought too sybaritic, hosts a masterclass series; and every college, lest it be thought too tunnel-visioned, opens its doors to a variety of outside influence. The masterclass has become one of the most politically correct forms of musical activity around; and the BBC has been quick to realise it.

The BBC Young Musician of the Year competition has been hammered more than most. In pitting an impossibly wide variety of instruments, skills and personalities against each other, it has been the target of critics, musicians and even managers who have seen it as something of an exploitative gladiatorial contest, all too ready to throw its young victims to the lions, and let life pick up the pieces from the subsequent careers of both winners and losers. What better way to save its conscience and mend its reputation than a healthy masterclass or two?

Not content with its new Lloyds Bank Young Composer series, and with associated documentaries on musical education, the BBC this year incorporated into the competition a series of five masterclasses which have been broadcast over the past five Mondays. Each one was filmed not in the studio, but in the colleges themselves, where the really respectable and serious work is done.

Students were selected from auditions, given a run-through to see if they got on with both the chosen master and the cameras, and finally revealed, in front of a small audience and a specially-designed backdrop, to show off their skills. Was this a serious educational venture, or just a shot of clinically-approved adrenalin to help the ageing competition on its way?



The trumpeter Hakan Hardenberger advises young trombonist Simon Cowen in one of the BBC masterclasses

One thing is certain: it made first-rate television. Take trumpeter Hakan Hardenberger's brass class, for instance. A horn, a trumpet and a trombone: a demure chemistry undergraduate, a scholarly musician from Wells Cathedral School and a highly ambitious musical anarchist, clearly influenced by the leather-clad professional, Christian Lindberg.

While cameras pirouetted round the set, Hardenberger vainly encouraged Heather McNaughton to "be as much on your own as possible. Try not to think about yourself!" James Arnold, the trumpeter, was told that a good performance happens "when you forget you're playing the trumpet: when the music is there and we don't know why". Well, it is certainly something to aim for.

Jean-Bernard Pommier, working with three or less

ricely contrasted pianists, came over as a highly entertaining cross between memories of Paul Tortelier in the same role, and Ustinov's Poirot on the scent of a musical victim. "If you are eppy, start zee piece wtz a smile!" he cried to a deeply serious-minded young pianist. "You like zart? Good! You are right to like eet, but mebbe Mr Beethoven, 'e doesn't like it, eh?" Later, in Etienne Simon Crawford-Philips, he met his match in verbal sparring; and with the reluctant Daniel-Ben Pienaar brushed up his skills in psychotherapy.

Hardenberger admitted to feeling frustrated by the whole exercise. "I thought there would be longer sessions—more time to work with the student before editing. What can you do in half an hour? Make a few jokes, get people in a good mood, and maybe by the end they'll be playing a bit

better... There you are in the middle of a thought, perhaps in a particularly intense piece of playing and along comes a cameraman and pulls you back! It's very hard. You can't let the tension go, you mustn't be boring. It just becomes a show."

Pommier, on the other hand, offers a typically Gallic philosophical overview. "We are in a time of communication—talking to each other through the media, and more than ever through concerts and recordings. But the process of exchanging information is not the same. When we speak about music, there is a limit when it comes to explanation. And masterclasses help to fill this gap."

The young musicians themselves see it all rather differently. Significantly, they seemed neither as troubled by the cameras, nor as cynical in

their approach as some of their masters. James Arnold, the 17-year-old trumpeter who was there because he had already been spotted by Hardenberger at a Royal Northern College of Music masterclass four years ago, and has been a protégé of his ever since, felt that it was all a valuable part of the learning experience.

Pianist Andrew Law, 19 and just started at the Royal Academy, also thoroughly enjoyed himself. "You have to be so open, to investigate every possibility about a piece in order to find a way that makes sense for you. It's brilliant. It's good for me, and good for the audience too. It develops their awareness of what a player is going through, of what's involved."

The semi-finals and finals of the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition run from Monday to April 10 on BBC2

ARTS BRIEFING

Back in her prime

PATRICIA HODGE will be bravely treading in the footsteps of Dame Maggie Smith this summer, when *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* returns to the British stage. Hodge will play the Edinburgh schoolmistress slipping into spinsterhood, in the Muriel Spark story that was turned into a play by Jay Presson Allen and then, in 1969, into the film that brought Smith her Best Actress Academy Award.

The new production will open at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley, in May and will arrive in the West End probably in the middle of the summer. The Scottish actress Edith MacArthur will play the forbidding headmistress.

● HAROLD PINTER is about to get the festival treatment at Dublin's Gate Theatre, which gave Samuel Beckett a similar honour a couple of years ago. Running from May 2 to 21, the Pinter festival will encompass much of his career from his 1960 play, *The Dumb Waiter*, through to his newest play, *Moonlight*. Ian Holm will again star in the latter, as he did at the Almeida in London last year, but this time opposite his real-life wife, Penelope Wilton. The playwright himself will direct his rarely seen 1969 play, *Landscape*, which originally starred the late Peggy Ashcroft.

Going for a song?

MARK ELDER's baton, Lesley Garrett's jewellery and a Mozart facsimile signed by Alfred Brendel: these are among the intriguing musical paraphernalia to be auctioned on Monday at the Royal Society of Arts. The sale is to raise money for the English National Opera's benevolent fund. ENO's last fund-raising auction raised £51,000. Tickets for the auction (£15) can be obtained from Robyn Barn in the ENO development department.

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A symphony of childhood distress

Peter Ackroyd on a fascinating study of Baudelaire: syphilitic dandy, laudanum addict — and a great poet

When Mme Baudelaire gave birth to a son, in the spring of 1821, it was the beginning of a lifelong romance. Charles Baudelaire considered his mother to be "mine alone... an idol and a friend" and, when she remarried after the death of her first husband, his sense of abandonment and desolation overshadowed the rest of his life. He never recovered from the experience of original betrayal, according to Joanna Richardson, and his poetry is one long symphony of childhood distress. But who can fathom the hurt of a child? Only one who remains a child — and there, in this narrative of insistent infantilism, are the tragedy and glory of Baudelaire.

He was naturally very clever but, even as a schoolboy, he was idle, feckless and apathetic. He had his first sexual experience at the age of 18, and on that occasion also contracted the venereal infection from which he was to die 27 years later. Few poets can have had their fate sealed so early in life, and from that time forward he seems to have looked upon sex with fear and distaste. He lived in a kind of delirium, in which

nothing in the world was real; that was how he became a great poet. At the age of 21 he could claim an inheritance from his dead father, and was able to devote himself to that dream of poetry and authorship which he had nurtured in his boyhood. But he squandered his patrimony; he sat in cafés with his

BAUDELAIRE
By Joanna Richardson
John Murray, £30

literary friends; he wrote incredible fantasies about his life and destiny. He was already a dandy, a religious being who wished to rise out of corrupted nature by being perfectly dressed. He was born a Catholic, after all, and realised that spectacle and display were the only true means of affirming his identity. That is why his verse always seems part of some languorous ritual, and even in the early poems one can smell the incense and glimpse the brightness of the monstrance. It is sometimes said that French literature is essentially that of the confessional, and in her introduc-

tion to this fascinating biography Richardson asserts Baudelaire's "need to do penance". The truth is that he enjoyed the penance even more than the confession.

Someone once observed that the life of Baudelaire was "a labyrinth with no way out" and there are occasions in this book when he becomes a character out of Racine, lost in the maze of the mighty city, reciting his disciplined cadences of longing and complaint in the terrible streets of cabs and gas-lamps and furnished rooms. A conseil judiciaire was appointed to administer his finances: he begged endlessly from his mother even as he tormented her.

Yet there is also something absurd about his extravagance, his inability to work, his endless self-pity. Perhaps his life is not to be compared to the drama of Racine but to that of Feydeau. He seems always to have demanded undying love and sustenance from his mother, in particular, by putting himself in the most squalid and impossible situations from which she was forced to rescue him. His constant demand for money was like the baby crying for milk from the maternal breast; but Baudelaire, who seems to have had a genuine horror of life and thus of the woman who had consigned him to it, was a baby with teeth. His letters to his mother are among the most extraordinary



Baudelaire by Matisse (1932), from *Baudelaire's Voyages: The Poet and His Painters* by Jeffrey Cohen (Pulfinch, £18.99)

Job, but in the case of Baudelaire the woes were self-inflicted.

He was not heroic: he was ridiculous. He was a posturer and a liar; he was domineering, dishonest and ruthless; he was a monster of selfishness and thoughtlessness. Yet he was also a wonderful poet and, no doubt to the disappointment of those who believe that great literature must be the product of a healthy mind or spirit, his "very genius depended upon the badness of his character."

He was 35 years old before 18 of his poems appeared in *La Revue des Deux Mondes* under the title of "Les Fleurs du Mal"; they caused "anasthenie" and they provoked official censorship. The book itself was published in 1857, and was promptly seized by the authorities. Baudelaire was imprisoned, and told his mother to consider this scandalous "foundation of my fortune."

He must have known that he was dying of syphilis but, like any good Catholic, he also knew that life on earth was no great matter; he did not care what he did just so long as he could give his perfect expression. He consigned himself to perpetual poverty and suffering, also, because in mistaking the life of some abandoned infant he could endlessly rehearse that original sense of loss which had formed his character. It was a way of main-

taining the integrity of the poetic voice which had been unsealed at the moment of his mother's betrayal — contemporaries often noticed the difference between his "superficial, everyday self" of pitiable misbehaviour and the rare, delicate "inner self" of the poetry; but, in truth, one could not have existed without the other.

Years of alcohol and laudanum, taken in part to ease the discomfort of creeping illness, eventually bore their strange fruit. In his 41st year he wrote that "I have felt the wind of the wing of madness pass over me"; his fate was implacable and he fell victim to fits and seizures. At the end he lay paralysed, unable to remember his own name, unable to speak at all save for one word which he repeated endlessly — "Rénome!" His mother was with him and promised that "I shall keep him like a little child."

He had returned to the condition to which he had always aspired. He was given the last sacraments, and his mother cradled him in her arms as death came. "Oh madame," the nurse said, "he is looking at you, of course he understands you, and he is smiling at you." But could it have been, perhaps, a smile of relief? In a prose-poem he had once asked his soul where it wished to reside and it replied, "Anywhere! Anywhere! As long as it is out of this world!"

Easter novels: Kafka on the Clyde, Sancho Panza in Manhattan, postmodern murders, post-coital musings

"YE GO for a pint and ye wind up a blind bastard — the story of Sammy's life." Sammy Samuels has lost his sight after a vicious police beating, and been turned out of custody and onto the Glasgow streets without even the bus-fare home. He has lost his shoes, his strength, his cigarettes and all memory of the weekend. When he has finally felt his way back to the flat, he finds he has no girlfriend, either. He is completely adrift and alone. By anybody's standards, it is a stroke of bad luck. Sammy, however, at first, refuses to be daunted — "it's no what ye would call panic-stricken" — and is soon groping towards a bright side: his days on a building-site are over, and it's got to mean a few more quid from the DSS. He's well used to misfortune. Elev-

Found eyeless in Glasgow

Gill Hornby

HOW LATE IT WAS,
HOW LATE
By James Kelman
Secker & Warburg, £14.99

en-odd years in the slammer have taught him how to survive. And, perhaps because one of his earlier calamities was having a boulder hurled at his head, he is, basically, an optimist. But this has to be the worst yet.

Most of the novel takes

place inside Sammy's increasingly frenzied brain. Just occasionally, Kelman dips gracefully into the third person; and, after a while, a handful of conversations take place. But for the most part it is just Sammy, grappling in his native Glaswegian with the nightmare in which he finds himself.

This is Kafka on the Clyde. He is still being harassed by the police. The DSS are being absurdly unhelpful about his new disability and he is getting night-time visits by a "rep" who wants a slice of his

compensation. He thinks he's being followed, but how can you tell if you can't see? How does he know whether his girlfriend left him a note? And what about the football?

Sammy "wasn't what ye call a thinker", as he readily admits, and in his present state of mental torture his solutions to his predicament become increasingly wild. (Where do you acquire a white stick? You and I might start at Casualty. Sammy staggers home and sets about feverish improvisation with a mop). Kelman conveys every sequence of his hero's runaway train of thought. His greatest achievement is Sammy's what makes this monologue so compulsively engaging is his absence of self-pity. Even bruised and newly-blinded, he can always see a joke.

Trying to have it both ways

Christina Koning

THEY WHISPER
By Robert Olen Butler
Secker & Warburg, £14.99

WRITING about sex from the point of view of the opposite sex is always a risky strategy, and Robert Olen Butler manages it convincingly enough. He tries, as it were, to have it both ways — describing each sexual encounter from the position both of his male narrator, Ira Holloway, and from that of Ira's various female partners.

The voices of these women are filtered through two consciousnesses, and may in fact be no more than projections of his fantasies. For all its attempts at even-handedness, the novel's main concern is with its central character's sexual history, from his earliest erotic experience at the age of 16 to his latest, with the woman he will marry.

The years between are filled with other encounters, many of a fairly impersonal nature.

This is most obviously the case in the passages describing Ira's years as a soldier in Vietnam, when his sexual experiences are necessarily limited to a succession of couplings with prostitutes in massage parlours. Despite the sordidness of this relationship with these girls, Ira, who appears to be something of a romantic, makes an effort to distinguish one from another by focusing on "something about their faces or their hands; something that maybe no one had ever noticed before."

The laudable attention to detail means that during subsequent sexual acts — notably with his wife — he finds himself recalling one girl's eyes or another girl's mouth, not to mention more intimate physical attributes. At any given moment, the marital bed is likely to be invaded by a

host of shadowy lovers, each offering alternative accounts of various erotic episodes. To add to the confusion, Ira's wife, Fiona, is also haunted by the ghosts of a traumatic sexual past, which intervenes between her and her partner at crucial moments and which prevent her enjoying sex — except, by some perverse quirk, when she has just been to Confession.

This would be comic, if Butler were not determined to take it seriously. But having established his scenario — a man who loves sex falls in love with a woman who can't stand sex — he fails to make the most of its ironic potential. Instead, his characters talk earnestly of "making love without guilt" — which doesn't sound a lot of fun — and play awful therapeutic sex games.

The problem with this book is that if one subtracts its lengthy descriptions of sexual acts, there is little in the way of plot, characterisation or ideas to make it interesting. The women who drift through its pages, their "whispers" made audible to the reader in italicised passages, are virtually interchangeable — convenient pegs on which the narrator can hang his amorous reminiscences. In these solemn descriptions of organs and orifices one looks in vain for a spark of the humour and joie de vivre to be found in, say, Molly Bloom's soliloquy in *Ulysses*. Now there was a man who could write about sex from a woman's angle.

Locked in the dungeon of self-reference

THIS postmodern mystery story is like a whole tribe of Russian dolls emerging out of each other's interiors and let loose by their creator. In a hall of mirrors, the novel begins — well, where does it begin? There is an epigraph from Auberon Saville, a fictitious book reviewer whose unfavourable review of the book we have been reading comes at the end — or should that be "after the end" — of the novel, before the appendix and the index. The epigraph is followed by a series of dedications to fictional characters

who appear later in the book. The first chapter is a newspaper obituary of an immunotoxinologist who, it seems, is also a murderer. His final victim was the author of the obituary itself, which had been composed (as obituaries frequently are) before its subject's death.

There then follows a series of tales in a style familiar from the Victorian and Edwardian period in the writing of masters like Kipling and Conrad. These three yarns featuring guilt, deception and murder are told by three travellers

Sean French

BETRAYALS
By Charles Palliser
Jonathan Cape, £14.99

snowbound on a train stuck in a Scottish blizzard. As they attempt to escape, one of them is murdered and this crime, and the wildly complicated attempts to avenge it, reverberate through the linked stories that make up the rest of the book.

Occupying more than a

third of the novel is the guileless, yet psychopathically gifted, diary of Sholto MacTweed, an assistant in a Glasgow second-hand bookshop. He becomes friends with the academic and murder buff, Horace Quaffle. Every character turns out to be connected to almost every other character in one way or another. Indeed, there is virtually nothing that could be said about this book that Palliser has not anticipated and incorporated in the story already. In its use of detective story and postmodern theorising, does it merely expand what Borges's stories had subtly hinted at?

HORACE Quaffle is a parodic version of the hero of Borges's great story, "An Examination of the Work of Herbert Quain", who has produced works much like Palliser's. "Cyril Pattison", author of *The Quintessence* and *The Sensation-Seeker* (Palliser's own previous books are *The Quincunx* and *The Sensationist*) enters the stage in order to accept the description "flashy, clever-clever, and meretricious in the most literal sense of the word". And if this were not self-referential enough, Palliser makes a point of it by then having Pattison incorporated in a novel-within-the-novel under the name Chalmers Pettison, later altered to Chalmers Pettison.

MUCH of the book is written in deliberately clumsy prose, using misspellings and clichés, challenging the reader to criticise it and to search for the truth, if there is a truth, behind the unreliable text.

This novel is unquestionably the product of an intelligent, talented writer. Especially in its early stages, this book has the endearing playfulness that writers like Chesterton and Conan Doyle brought to their greatest stories. But it is significant that Borges's philosophical detective stories about elaborate fictional worlds, intellectual traps in which the master criminal becomes a form of creator, were all brief sketches of a few pages. Ground pectorally out to over 300 pages, the high spirits pall. The presiding symbol of the book, illustrated on its cover, is the scorpion, the malevolent but self-subverting creature forever poised to sting itself. It is a picture of cruel elegance that Palliser's novel finally doesn't live up to. A more appropriate picture would be of the author disappearing up his own fundament. It may be a deft act of connotation but it's not a spectacular sport.



Woman's hands (1956), by Wynn Bullock. Born in Chicago in 1902, Bullock has been a singer, a businessman and a photographer. This study is taken from *The Enchanted Landscape: Photographs 1940-1975* (Hale, £27)

Morte de Dudley, jester and quester

Fiona Pattison

DEATH OF A
FANTASIST
By Simon Mason
Constable, £14.99

"Brideshead" haircut and flaming orange boots, because "self-abandonment begins with an irrevocable gesture". As this well-paced novel, rather than its hero, undergoes increasingly imaginative developments, Dudley changes clothes often, but gets no closer to reality.

This Flashman without the flash, who never quite pulls it off, finds himself soured by farcical encounters with both reality and television. Dud-

ley's improbable adventures are worth reading just for the unfalteringly surreal dialogue with black Bella "LaRose, as in the well-known *Romantic de*", which is always clever, if sometimes clever-clever. The gun-popping, smoke-blowing Bella, Martin's publicist, is another unusual variation on romance convention. Dudley falls in lust with her, but she is no damsel in distress. Unchivalrous "Dud", as she calls him, has no hope of rescuing her; instead, on the Empire State Building, he is the one in trouble.

Dizzier, the staggering action stumbles on, our hero "depleted by the constant sacrifice of character to plot", until Mason, never predictable, turns tender. Quite late,

as Dudley's putative romance looks less likely and his strange link with the shadowy Martin clanks, Dudley surprises himself. Recognising his "ridiculous but real" Moon Loon cap as "symbolic", this hitherto virtuous Billy Liar frightens himself by feeling protective towards his friend. This doesn't help.

In a memorable scene, a hallucinatory mixture of *Le Mort d'Arthur*, *Dante and Stephen*, he follows Bella through a door marked "Members Only" to his Chapel Perilous, a gym where he swallows a tablet tasting of chalk, marked V for verity, and Bella mercilessly makes him work it out.

As this confident and certainly unusual novel reels to its technicolor end at Martin's award ceremony, Dudley has to admit: "I don't know anything more. I don't want to know anything." But, by this time, it's too late.

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Bigger means worse

THIS BOOK falls into the social forecasting category occupied by works such as Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock* and Faith Popcorn's *The Popcorn Report*. All three authors are celebrated US management gurus who try to predict the future. They are paid large sums of money by American corporations to give talks and prepare research to detect socio-economic trends. I always get the impression that books such as this are a by-product of the seminar circuit, written to add credibility and generate some extra income.

The central theme of the book is that the bigger the world's economy, the more powerful its smallest players become. Phrases such as "downsizing, rationalising, un-bundling and demerging, and the difficulties in recent years of US corporate giants such as IBM, General Motors and Kodak might suggest this theory of the rise of the entrepreneur holds true.

My experience in business leaves me unconvinced. While pointless conglomerates are out of fashion, in every industry you see ever-greater international consolidation: cars, media, food, retailing, financial services—everywhere big groups are increasing market share and fragmentation is shrinking. Developing economies such as China may be spawning millions of entre-

Lake Johnson

GLOBAL PARADOX
By John Naisbitt
Nicholas Brearley, £14.99

preneurs, but there too there will be a move towards industrial concentration. I fear this tendency towards scale is a characteristic of technology-driven capitalism.

Naisbitt argues that technology and globalisation are "empowering" individuals to compete against monolithic multinationals. Certainly deflation in the costs of telecommunications and travel are two of the most startling changes in recent times, allowing business to be carried out on a worldwide basis in a far more efficient way. But big business can use cheap phones and flights as well. Two chapters cover these topics, discussing the rather nebulous multimedia revolution of information superhighways, virtual reality and the like. The practical applications of all these advances are not really spelt out, giving the reader the impression that the everyday benefits of these grand technical concepts are yet to be discovered.

China is the other great subject of the book, and here Naisbitt is at his strongest. Few people in dread, self-obsessed countries such as Britain have any idea of the looming economic might of China and its neighbours such as Hong Kong and Taiwan. Using the purchasing power parity method of comparison, China already has the world's third largest economy, behind the US and Japan. If it keeps its breakneck rate of growth, within a decade or so it will be larger than the US.

Our laughable diplomatic follies over Hong Kong, and more recently Malaysia, are damaging to our economic future. We must adjust our attitude to the Far East—and rapidly.

Global Paradox is easy to read, but I can't help thinking it was written from cuttings, if the notes and style are anything to go by. Its chapters do not really weave into a coherent argument. They read as if they have been thrown together to pad out the book. At least it is fairly up-to-date, taking material from very recent publications. The weakest section is devoted to a universal code of conduct, covering subjects such as business corruption and environmental issues. It manages to be superficial and boring.

Global Paradox could have been punchier as a short pamphlet. The quality of writing and depth of research fail to live up to the ambitious sweep of the book; but if you have an interest in China, you could get it for that alone.

Lake Johnson is a director of several companies, including PizzaExpress plc and Utility Cable plc.

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Roger Scruton's *magnum opus* suggests that he has spent much of the past 25 years sitting in his study thinking

What it is to cogitate

Oliver Letwin believes Roger Scruton has put us all in his debt with his apologia for philosophy

Roger Scruton is well known as a polemicist, aesthetician, novelist, editor, and polymath. It is less well known—but now quite obvious—that he has also been spending much of the past quarter of a century sitting in his study thinking. The results of this thinking are contained in a profound and illuminating book.

Scruton modestly presents his work as a survey of modern philosophy and this, indeed, it is—a remarkably rich smorgasbord. It covers a wide range of topics, from the philosophy of mathematics to the Devil. It explores numerous ways of looking at those topics, from "ordinary language philosophy" to existentialism, and it applies the broadest possible definition of the "modern"—portraying Aristotle and Descartes as participants in the same conversation as Davidson and Kripke. But the book is much more than a mere survey.

In the first place, it is implicitly, and to an extent explicitly, an argument about the subject-matter of philosophy. Scruton has an immensely catholic view of the scope of philosophy and (by modern standards) an unusual sense of the connectedness of the different parts of philosophy: he sees, for example, the study of formal logic as something which is intimately (albeit unobviously) related to the study of ethics, and the study of metaphysics as something which is intimately related to the study of political philosophy.

Next, the book is an attempt to identify the issues which really matter to philosophers. The issues in question centre on the relationships between reality and appearance, between objective and subjective, between the natural and the human, and between scientific and non-scientific explanation. As Scruton sees it, these are all restatements of the same problem. If I ask how appearance can be distinguished from reality, I am in effect asking how that which I, as a subject, see relates to what objectively exists; or (put another way) how nature "out there" relates to the concepts that we as humans use to deal with it; or (in yet another idiom) how the scientific picture of nature relates to the way in which the humanities picture the world.

Beyond identifying these as the recurring questions of philosophy the book also gives an answer to them—not, it is true, in the sense of offering a new philosophy, but in the sense of recommending a combination of Kant and Wittgenstein as the answer. The argument here is subtle and multi-variant, and a simple summary is inevitably something of a travesty.

But, very roughly, Scruton sees Kant as having put forward two immeasurably profound and true assertions. The first is that the world as we experience it (the spatio-temporal world of physical causality) is the only world there is to be experienced or discovered. The second is that we ourselves are not governed by the rules of causality which govern that world but are, rather, transcendent and free, able to direct our wills in accordance with reason. Scruton argues that these two propositions

contain most of what needs to be said about "us" and "it". But he recognises that the two propositions are also ostensibly contradictory: how, if we are creatures of nature, are we ourselves free of nature's laws of causality?

The resolution of this apparent contradiction Scruton finds in the Wittgensteinian proposition that our sense of ourselves (and hence our reason and our freedom) derives not from some mysterious "ghost in the machine", but from the social constructs (language and the like) which we have inherited and developed. In short, Scruton claims, we have made ourselves more than animals and given ourselves a "point of view" through our capacity for and inheritance of society and the conceptual framework which social convention makes possible.

This substantive "answer" is connected, finally, with Scruton's thesis about the purpose of philosophy. This is, in his view, to conduct "an exercise in conceptual ecology... a last-ditch attempt to 'save the appearances'". Scruton is arguing that philosophy can (if rightly understood) validate the reality of the human world—the moral choices, the beauty and ugliness, the love and hatred that inhabit that world—by showing how this "thin topology" of social construct stands in relation to the natural world.

And that is why, for Scruton, ethics, logic, political philosophy and metaphysics are intimately bound up with one another. Those branches of philosophy which deal with the characteristics of human understanding and society can, by illuminating our conceptual schemes, help to indicate how those schemes relate to the natural world. In so doing, they can help to resolve the deep epistemological and metaphysical questions of the relationship between the human perspective and the spatio-temporal world of causality that lies "out there".

Is Scruton right? The question, inevitably, remains open. But, even for those who do not share my feeling that he is at least in the region of the truth, his book will be of the greatest possible interest. Right or wrong, *Modern Philosophy* has the inestimable merit of rescuing its subject matter from being either mechanical (as much "analytical Anglo-Saxon" philosophy can at first sight appear to be) or close to inane (as much "continental philosophy" can seem to the uninitiated).

Scruton shows convincingly that, both in the arcana of the analytic tradition and in the flights of fancy of the phenomenological, existentialist, structuralist, and deconstructivist, there is really something of a unity, if often partial and wayward—answers to problems with which philosophy has wrestled for centuries and which give it a central place in our intellectual life. For this, regardless of the truth or falsity of his own approach, we owe Scruton a considerable debt of gratitude.

Alasdair Palmer will interview Roger Scruton on the books pages in this Saturday's *Weekend Times*.

MODERN PHILOSOPHY

By Roger Scruton
Sinclair-Stevenson, £25

Good man and faithful servant

Ronald Brownstein

RALPH BUNCHE
An American Life
By Brian Urquhart
Norton, £22



Bunche: a fine diplomat but with firm principles

WITH THIS respectful but powerful biography, the diplomat Brian Urquhart has performed a prodigious act of historical excavation, reclaiming Ralph Bunche for a generation of readers in the US and abroad. A black American who won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work as a mediator at the United Nations, Bunche emerges in these pages as every bit the intellectual and diplomatic equal of George Kennan, Paul Nitze and his other contemporaries among the celebrated "Wise Men" of the post-Second World War era.

And yet Bunche's name, and his accomplishments, are far more obscure today. Reading this book, I was somewhat reminded of the great stars of the old American Negro baseball leagues—Satchel Paige or Josh Gibson—who equalled national icons like Cy Young and Babe Ruth in everything but recognition.

Two exchanges with Harry Truman, separated by a period of 11 years, reveal Bunche's essence. In 1949, Bunche was at the apex of his success, having just completed the exhaustive armistice negotiations that ended the first Arab-Israeli war and eventually produced his Nobel Prize. In May, President Truman asked Bunche to return from his post at the United Nations and accept an appointment as assistant secretary of state with responsibility for African and Asian affairs. Bunche turned him down, though nothing was closer to his heart than the problems of the newly-formed states emerging from colonial rule. But a larger consideration intruded: Bunche told the President he did not want his children to grow up under the Jim Crow segregation laws that still confined the blacks of the nation's capital to second-class citizenship.

In 1960, a newspaper reporter asked Bunche about Truman's comments criticising the black and white students just beginning their sit-down demonstrations against segregated restaurants in the South. Bunche replied: "I would have been happier if Mr Truman had said, as I believe would have been the case, that the problem wouldn't have arisen because

revolution without surrendering either his racial pride or his faith in integration. America's total mobilisation during the Second World War created a lasting national patrimony by systematically drawing into government service men of such energy and skill. From his academic perch as a political scientist at Howard, Bunche was brought into the Office of Strategic Services (the CIA's predecessor) to work on issues relating to Africa; he migrated from there to the State Department, and on to the UN in 1946, where he spent the last 25 years of his life, most of them as under-secretary.

Urquhart, a long-time colleague of Bunche, is at his best recounting his friend's tireless negotiating efforts in the Middle East, the Congo and elsewhere. Bunche is seen as resilient and tenacious, flexible and firm, and utterly scrupulous: when his son was drafted to serve in the Vietnam War, which he bitterly (but privately) opposed, Bunche would not use his influence to attempt to quash the order. His moral code revolved around equal opportunity, shared responsibility, and common standards—ideas that seem nobly anachronistic in an America of the revolving door in government, and racial entitlement in social policy.

Between crises, the book flags. Urquhart is a competent, but never arresting writer who invariably sees the best in almost all of his UN associates; at points, you catch yourself wondering if the cloakroom at the UN kept a separate closet for wings. With the exception of a series of poignant letters from Bunche's wife lamenting his long absences, the diplomat's personal life remains distant. In this book, Bunche comes alive mainly in his work; that may have been the case in life as well, but we need more evidence than we are presented to decide.

Still, Urquhart has admirably succeeded in restoring to view the ideas and example of an extraordinary man. It is difficult to imagine a president or prime minister who, after reading this book, wouldn't wish Bunche in the room with them when the hard decisions have to be made.

THE Sharpeville massacre of 1960, in which 69 protesters were killed and 180 wounded, was the first major catalyst for an exodus, spanning three decades, of tens of thousands of South Africans opposed to apartheid. Some went by choice: in search of an education denied to them under the privations of "Bantu Education", or to help more actively in "the struggle". But most were forced to leave, often under cover of night, on foot over hundreds of miles and across crocodile-infested rivers, to escape a fiercely oppressive regime which was suffocating all forms of opposition.

Samantha Weinberg

THE RIFT
The Exile Experience of South Africans
By Hilda Bernstein
Jonathan Cape, £25

BANANA SUNDAY
Datelines from Africa
By Chris Munnion
William Waterman, £16.95

Most of the exiles had little idea what was in store for them. Many had left in a hurry, without being able to notify their family where they had gone, even that they were alive—these were the days of detention without trial, of mysterious deaths in police custody—and with no clue as to how long they might be away.

Hilda Bernstein, a writer and artist who left South Africa illegally in 1964, spent the last four years travelling the world to interview more than 300 fellow exiles: about the forces that propelled them into exile, their experiences outside South Africa, and their expectations of the future.

The Rift is a collection of some of those interviews, linked only by short introductions and explanations. It is not, as may be expected of a work of this kind, a real page-turner. Instead of plunging the reader headfirst into a shocking account of the horrors of apartheid, Bernstein lets her witnesses speak for

Old hands, severed limbs

themselves and slowly, fragment by fragment, their individual voices join together to form a chorus of experiences that is both chilling and affecting.

It is not a balanced book—but Bernstein makes no bones about her political sympathies and that, in the end, is not the point. *The Rift*'s most important role is to fill the gaps of experience censored by the Nationalist government during 46 years of rule, and to hold up as examples the dedicated and committed people—artists as well as freedom fighters, children as well as senior politicians—who devoted their lives to fighting a repugnant political system, often at the expense of personal happiness and fulfilment.

For their trials will not end with majority rule. Even as Bernstein collected her interviews, the exiles started to return. For many, this has been almost as traumatic as the original flight into exile. The land they found is not the same as the one they left: "All through the years the South African exiles sang songs, the songs they brought with them from home. But at home they are singing different songs now," Bernstein writes. "The rift can never be healed."

In *Banana Sunday*, there are more tales of treacherous trips across crocodile-infested waters. Only this time the protagonists are journalists, more specifically GOAHs (Genuine Old Africa Hands)—an elite club of which the author, Chris Munnion, is a fully paid-up member. They were the boozey backs who called each other "old boy" and who, armed only with a battered Remington typewriter, a couple of cleft sticks and ten trunks of appropriate clothing, risked life and limb to send back vivid—and imaginative—dispatches from the "dark continent".

Munnion's book is often irreverent and frequently politically incorrect. It is also

the objects of Munnion's scorn—the new breed who speak in computerese and write their stories with "a Diet Coke and a hygiene-wrapped sandwich" beside their word processors. The collection of anecdotes is hilarious. Munnion almost out-scopes *Scorpions* (with fulsome acknowledgement). In doing so, he also manages to instruct us, at a romping canter, about the decades of "the continent's painful shedding of its colonial skin".

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Top players assemble for 'fifth' major

Price places his main emphasis on family values

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN JACKSONVILLE

THE Players' Championship, which begins here in Florida today, is the first truly global golf tournament of 1994. The European professionals might have begun in Madeira early in the New Year, and the Americans were swinging competitively in the California desert in the first week of January, but this tournament brings together the best players from both tours. Seven Europeans are among the field of 144 competing for a total prize of \$2.5 million and a first prize of \$450,000.

The Players' Championship is the fresh-faced youngster among the game's leading tournaments. It started as recently as 1974, in Atlanta. Since 1982, it has been played at the purpose-built Tournament Players' Club in Ponte Vedra on former swamp land one mile from the Atlantic Ocean.

The organisers like to imagine it as the game's fifth major championship. This is presumptuous tosh. Major championships grow organically, clothed by years of history. They cannot have greatness thrust upon them. Yet the field is as strong as any event of the

year, with 27 of the top 30 and 67 of the top 100 players in the world.

Players like Nick Price have arrived here trailing clouds of glory after a victory and a second place in the past two tournaments in the United States. The victory was his ninth in the 1990s, two more than any other player on the United States Tour.

Greg Norman retains his No 1 position in the world rankings but Price, who is the defending champion, this week, is considered to be the

best player in the world at the moment and probably has been for the past six months.

"The most important thing to me is health and the well-being of my family," Price, one of the friendliest of golfers, said. "Since our son and daughter have been born, my golf has taken off. Our family is very close. I feel very fortunate. Now, when I practice, I don't just practice for myself. I'm doing things to pay for our family's future."

Nick Faldo did not compete in this event in 1993, when he was at home in Surrey for the birth of his daughter, Georgia. In 1992, he led by one stroke after 54 holes and remained in contention for the next 15 holes until he dropped a stroke on the par-five 16th. He finished with a 74 in joint second place.

Faldo has begun 1994 slowly. This is his fourth event of the year. He missed the cut in Phuket, Malaysia, in February and in his first event in the United States three weeks ago. A good finish was on the cards at the Honda Classic two weeks ago until he took a double and triple bogey in his fourth round. His round today will be only his ninth of the year.

He will compete in New Orleans next week but if he does not start to show some form, he will go into the US Masters, the week after that, rather more ring rusty than he would want.

Severiano Ballesteros is presenting the image of a confused man. He has lost weight and, with it, some of the intensity that used to burn in his eyes. He does not want to talk about his swing, his back or anything very much. He is happiest, seemingly, to be just another competitor.

"You look very lean and fit," someone said to him yesterday. Ballesteros patted his navel. "I make such small changes now I cannot afford to eat too much," he replied.

He revealed that he is receiving coaching from Mac O'Grady in Palm Beach. O'Grady is very unusual. He is a man of enormous intelligence who can play golf left and right handed, went to the qualifying school 18 times before winning his card, married a Japanese and speaks many languages.

He is, how can one put this in a nice way, one golf ball short of a sleeve. For instance, he once said: "I want to climb into the volcano and be at one with the lava."

Only one European has made the cut every year he has entered and he is the reigning US Masters champion. Bernhard Langer finished second last year and joint fourth last year.

Ballesteros is to make his first appearance in the Benson and Hedges International Open for four years at St Mellion, Cornwall, on May 5 to 8. He has never won the title.



Ballesteros: confused

Alfredsson trying to get putts going

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN RANCHO MIRAGE, CALIFORNIA

BEHIND the wraparound dark glasses, Helen Alfredsson looked nut and tense on the putting green at Mission Hills country club the other day. She was alternating putters and not holding too many putts with either of them. She was not a happy champion and it was only a pro-am day.

Today is the real thing. Alfredsson starts the defence of the Dinah Shore title she won last year, her first and only victory in the United States. The Swede became the first European to win the Dinah, the first major championship of the women's season.

She launched a run of four victories by Europeans in six weeks - Trish Johnson, twice, and Laura Davies following her example - and set herself up for the best season of her career, finishing fifth on the money list, with dollars \$402,685 (about £270,000).

Last year, on a course voted by the players as the best maintained on tour, she was one of only seven players to break par. Mission Hills measures 6,446 yards and there are times, when the wind comes whipping between the mountains, and the sand swirling out of the desert, that par is not just acceptable but remarkable.

The Dinah, regarded as the women's Masters, has a field of 115, 11 of them Europeans,

all hoping to emulate Alfredsson, although Davies, who won in such style last week, was falling unwell and withdrew from the pro-am.

Shore died in February at the age of 76. Her obituaries listed the achievements in show business - the gold records, the Emmy awards, the appearances on the Ten Most Admired Women in the World list - that made her famous. But she was also a keen golfer and was made an honorary member of the Ladies' PGA on Tuesday because, ever since this event started in 1972, with a purse of dollars \$110,000 (it is \$700,000 now), she championed the professionals' cause and was the hostess with the mostest.

Frank Sinatra and Bob Hope were friends and this year the list of pro-am players included Joe DiMaggio, Gerald Ford, Donald O'Connor, Charles Schulz and Robert Wagner.

Juli Inkster, who has won the Dinah twice but is not here this year because she is expecting her second child, summed up beautifully. "Dinah was big-time famous but she treated everyone the same. She always had time for you whether you were a golfer or a golfer. She always made you feel special. She had so much class and charisma."

And so has her championship, although it will not be the same without her.



The Cambridge University Boat Race crew, using the big-blade oars so popular at top level, practise on the Thames this week

Big blades offer doubtful advantage

British rowing, which is on a crest of a wave with four world champions, is suffering from an epidemic of slipped discs that may be associated with incorrect use of the big-blade oars, which have been popularised in this country by leading internationalists and will be used by both crews in the Boat Race on Saturday.

So serious is the problem that the Amateur Rowing Association (ARA) is holding a seminar next month, involving coaches and medical authorities, to examine why 15 leading rowers have suffered severe back injuries.

Some authorities have blamed the prolonged endurance training using "meat-cleaver" blades, which can lead to excessive tiredness and thus to the injury-prone position of a rounded lower back. Others believe the injuries come from the frequent use of ergometer rowing machines or even the lack of flexibility routines carried out by oarsmen and women before and after outings.

International oarsmen like Tim Foster, Roger Brown and

John Goodbody looks at the rise in disc problems in rowing and a possible link with new equipment

Chris Elmitt have undergone operations and Matt Stalford, an orthopaedic surgeon, writing in *Rowing*, the ARA's official magazine, said: "Until two years ago, the doctors who look after squad rowers and I had not seen serious disc disease in our athletes, but at the moment there appears to be an epidemic."

However, Cambridge, the favourites for the 14th Boat Race, have suffered no severe back injuries, despite employing the combination of big blades and the lengthy outings that were practised extensively by the East Germans during their domination of international rowing in the Eighties.

John Wilson, one of the Cambridge coaches, who also works for a company selling the big blades, said: "If these

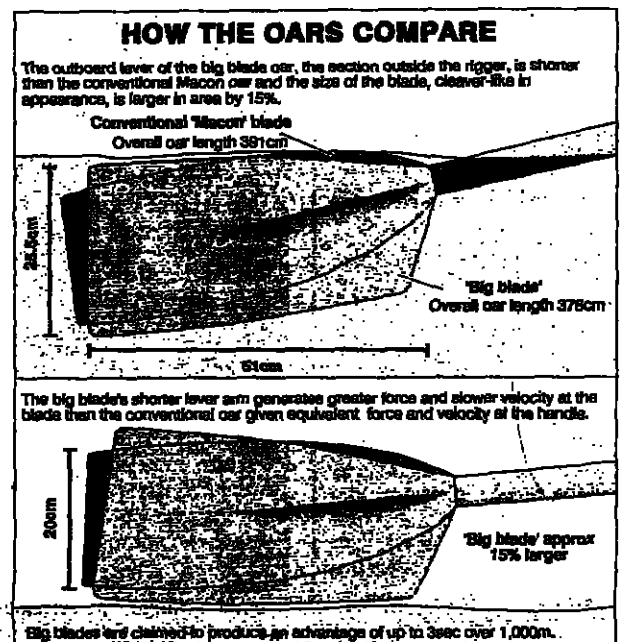
oars are rigged as we recommend, then the load is similar to the more traditional blades. Problems have been caused elsewhere by the increase in the volume of training and the lack of proper technical coaching. This is a recipe for disaster. There is shortage of good club coaches and some people get ingrained in bad technical habits.

If a large volume of training is done, then it has got to be strictly monitored. Otherwise people get too tired and are then more susceptible to injury."

Wilson denied that there was any direct link between the big blades, which have a 15 per cent greater surface area than the traditional Macon oars, and the outbreak of back problems.

Chris Baillieu, the 1977 world champion, who recently attended a Fisa (international rowing federation) technical conference, reported: "Although there are no statistics available, these injuries seem to be a particularly British experience at the moment."

Dr Ann Redgrave, the chief



medical officer to the national squad and wife of Steve Redgrave, the triple Olympic coxless pairs champion, said that several factors could have contributed to the problem: "Athletes are now on the water for three hours, sitting

in the same position. The plastic equipment now is much stiffer than the old wooden oars, which had a bit of give."

She believed that the big blade oars were implicated in the injuries. They have a more efficient pick-up of water. However, if under the stress of heavy training, competitors begin to round their lower backs, instead of keeping them straight, then this can lead to injuries. "It is a serious problem. We want the answer now. We will have to do a lot of research."

Dr Peter Thomas, a member of Fisa's medical committee, believes that not enough rowers have learnt how to use the big blades. "People are also training far more now-days," he said. "If you drive a car 80,000 miles in a year, you are more likely to get mechanical breakdowns than if you drive 20,000 miles."

Oxford coxswain shows consummate skill

LIZ Chick, Oxford University's coxswain, received applause from watching watermen when she manoeuvred her crew on to the stake boat yesterday morning (Mike Rosewell writes).

Placing the stern of a 60ft boat into the waiting hands of a stake boatman with a tide pushing you along is not easy, but a shout of "Excellent, well done" from an independent boatman summed up her efforts. Admittedly there will be more tide on Saturday. Both crews concentrated on

strokes out of the blocks. It could be a vital issue for them. Cambridge's approach to their starts was just as meticulous. Harry Mahon, their New Zealand coach, leaving the mooring to colleague John Wilson. With Oxford having first call on the stake boat, Cambridge paddled to St Paul's and, as a preparation for the worst, selected a stretch of rough water to undertake a series of three stroke pieces before returning to the waiting stake boat. Just as their cox, Martin Haycock, was about to

attach, Martin Botting, the stake boatman, saw the Tidy Thames Refuse Barge approach and he paddled his dinghy swiftly away.

There was nothing untidy about the start Cambridge produced without him, striking 40 and covering in four strokes. This morning will see the last chapter to the start procedure when both crews have a rehearsal with this year's umpire, John Garrett. TODAY'S OUTINGS: Oxford: 10am (umpire's rehearsal with old Oxford boat); Cambridge 9.30 (umpire's rehearsal) and 4pm.

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Test draws to dreary end despite Sidhu's run charge

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

NAVJOT Sidhu, India's opening batsman, produced an aggressive innings of 98 but was unable to prevent the one-off Test against New Zealand in Hamilton from petering out into a draw on the fifth day at Hamilton yesterday.

Set a target of 310 runs to win in 66 overs after the home side declared at 368 for seven 40 minutes before lunch, India finished the day on 177 for three.

Sachin Tendulkar and Sanjay Manjrekar remained undefeated at the close but neither side had looked capable of securing victory in the last two sessions of play.

In an opening partnership of 102, Sidhu and Nayan Mongia had, however, shown some signs of attempting to reach the target, but after Mongia and then Vinod Kambli fell, the Indians were content to play for the draw.

Mongia, whose patience was an ideal foil for Sidhu's powerful hitting, was bowled when he came out of his shell to sweep Matthew Hart, the off spinner, and missed.

Sidhu, however, was in complete command during his 177-ball stay at the crease, striking three sixes and eight fours. He was particularly harsh on Hart and Shane Thomson, the off spinners. But Sidhu slowed down as he approached what would have been his sixth Test century and, when two short of the feat, edged a ball from Hart into Adam Parore's gloves.

Kambli also fell in the last session, bowled by Chris Pringle, the medium pace bowler, after completely misjudging a straight ball. Sidhu and Tendulkar then steadied the ship and removed any faint hopes New Zealand had.

Ken Rutherford, the New Zealand captain, earlier declared New Zealand's innings closed after establishing a lead of over 300 and losing Stephen Fleming, who had looked set to hit a century on his Test debut.

NEW ZEALAND: First Innings: 187 (K Rutherford 85, J Smith 4 for 65)

Second Innings: 258 (S Tendulkar 100, S Manjrekar 85, N Mongia 85, V Kambli 45, S Pringle 4 for 65)

INDIA: First Innings: 246 (M Azharuddin 85, S R Tendulkar 45, D K Morrison 4 for 52)

Second Innings: 177 (S Tendulkar 100, S Manjrekar 85, N Mongia 85, V Kambli 45, S Pringle 4 for 65)

FULL OF WICKETS: 1-58, 2-172, 3-176, 4-220, 5-265, 6-317, 7-355

SCORING: Sidhu 85-4-104-11; Kapil Dev 16-2-1; Hart 24-4-33-1; Kambli 27-6-6-1; Chanderpaul 28-6-97-4

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Touring loses its charm in changing world

Clement Freud, in Guyana, longs for the days when England's cricketers could afford a smile



wives wear pearls and sensible shoes, brought a thermos and chicken sandwiches in a carrier bag while all around ate curried goat and nan and drank Coke.

And they were demonstrably on our side, clapping at all the right times — like after a maiden over and when a partnership reached 50.

British support in Guyana amounted to two couples though we had three City tycoons, staying in the Queen Elizabeth suite of our hotel, doing their best for us from the pavilion. They left on the rest day. On Tuesday morning when the England second innings total reached 150 there was not a palm that

made contact with its partner; not a murmur of goodwill let alone a cry of "well played".

Rumour has it that 4,000 fans are flying out for the Barbados Test — which may be one Test match too late. We could have done with them here, must have them in Trinidad where BWIA International fly in the time it takes InterCity's sleeper to go from Inverness to London. Excellent journeys both.

I have a word of warning: when it comes to being ambassadors, the present England team are not in the same league as were Cowdrey's men. Courteous — all, Gregarious — most, Wazir — some. I got to know them and

enjoyed their company. This time I spent six days in the same hotel as our team and spoke only to Atherton, whom I had met before.

I shared a lift with Graeme Hick on five occasions and never once had my "good morning" acknowledged.

Russell is a loner — he and his tins of baked beans keep themselves to themselves. Caddick is known not to mix and the chain-smoking Tufnell is widely regarded as an odd — in the view of Everton Weekes, "an odd of the worst sort".

Lewis does not make eye contact, which may be because a cricketer writer has investigated his private life and alleged discrepancies in the player's published age and parentage.

I am a Lewis fan; I was also a fellow hotel guest. The smile or kindly word from him, or from any of our England

team, would have been automatic 30 years ago. They are not forthcoming today.

Boycott, who is now as dedicated a communicator as he was full-time hermit in his playing days, says it is because they are a young team; have no experience of touring, are shy — unlike the worldly-wise Cowdrey, Barrington, Grayson, Edrich, Hobbs, Brown, Jones, Knott, D'Oliveira.

"Atherton is not like that," Boycott says.

I agree. I also feel that if you want to be loved — and this is a crucially important requirement for an international team — one in 16 (or a six per cent niceness factor) is not enough unless you can deliver the goods.

And there is no reason to believe that they will do that against the dedicated aggression of Richie Richardson's team.

Test rivals plagued by problems of provincial nature

Alan Lee reports from Trinidad on the conflict of interest afflicting the West Indies and England as they prepare to do battle again

INSULARITY has been the enemy of both West Indian and English cricket this week, though in contrasting ways. One team here in Port of Spain is suffering from passionate accusations of provincial bias, the other simply from a lack of passion in the provinces.

This will be hard to believe for those at home cringing at the domination of the West Indies in this series but the public of Trinidad is threatening to boycott the third Test, which starts here tomorrow, unless their own Phil Simmons is allowed to resume his inadequate international career.

It is not the first time such militant action has been taken on a Caribbean island, usually on slender grounds, but it is a reminder of the immense importance attached to feeling involved in the success of the West Indies team.

Compare this with attitudes around the English shires, where county officials and members range between apathy and resentment when it comes to supporting any move designed to place greater emphasis on the national team. Some would prefer their local players not to be chosen. Most, ostrich-like, resist all efforts to further streamline and strengthen the flabby county system.

So it is that this week, reluctant and familiar laments have been heard from both camps. David Holford, chairman of the West Indies selectors, has described as "nonsense" the persistent suggestion that his panel applies local bias. Keith Fletcher, the England team manager, called for "a tougher school" of domestic cricket while wearily acknowledging that the counties will not give the idea house-room.

above their own is when they are anticipating their annual life-saving share of the international revenue pull.

The Test match tomorrow offers a timely microcosm. West Indies have fewer worries about losing than about whether anybody will turn up to watch them win. England, demoralised in Georgetown, fear that the next game, like the last, will expose the fatal flaws in their cosy, provincial cricket.

Simmons will be able to experience the English system at first hand when he joins Leicestershire next month and he is the type — strong, positive and versatile — to prosper. What he patently is

not, however, is an accomplished Test cricketer.

After 18 matches, most of them as an opener, he averages only 24, yet the public outcry here began when his place was only rumoured to be under threat and has gathered hysterical strength in newspaper columns and radio phone-ins, since his justifiable omission in Georgetown.

One radio poll claims that 70 per cent of the island people will boycott the match is Simmons does not play, despite the impressive debut by his teenage replacement, Shivnarine Chanderpaul. But the selectors should have their salvation in the guaranteed presence of Brian Lara. Surely all of his native Trinidad will want to watch him, after his sublime 167 last week.

England's problems are less public, more profound. The low standards of skill and consistency, cruelly laid bare on this tour, have their roots in the domestic structure. Fletcher said: "We must allow four-day cricket a chance, because it will certainly help," he said.

"But we need an improvement in the quality and a reduction in the quantity of the cricket we play."

Fletcher favours a two-division system: in the county championship, encouraging the development of a competitive elite. But he knows it is a distant dream. "It is going to be difficult, if not impossible, to get it through the counties, who must make such decisions," he said.

Diary, page 18



Lara, whose sparkling form offers salvation for the West Indies selectors

Wigan turn for home with rivals barring path to title

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

WARRINGTON, Castleford and Bradford Northern, the pretenders to Wigan's rugby league crown, have still to play the title-holders and thus the fate of the Stones Bitter Championship is in their hands.

At least, the air of uncertainty should be maintained until the season concludes on April 24. Wigan have the games in hand to triumph for a fifth consecutive season, but the start — at Hull last night — of a ten-match run-in is a familiar mission that might just prove impossible this time.

With away fixtures at Sheffield Eagles, Hull Kingston Rovers, Oldham and most awkwardly, Bradford and St Helens, a Wigan side yet to appear as consistently outstanding as in previous years does not command the confidence of old.

Bradford, until they met bottom-placed Leigh at home 11 days ago, were cruising at the top of the first division. A calamitous defeat handed Wigan the advantage once more, although this still could be wrested back in their meetings on April 12 and 15.

To stand the best chance, Bradford need David Watson, their talented New Zealand full back, who will today appeal against a five-match suspension imposed by the Rugby Football League disciplinary committee for his dismissal against Leigh.

Castleford remain rank outsiders yet need to keep plugging away, while Warrington, after losing ground of late, regained some of it, with a Jonathan Davies master-class to win 14-6 at Leigh on Tuesday. The Welshman scored two tries, including a run of 60 yards for the first, and three goals.

Sonny Nickle, the St Helens international second row forward, has not played for seven weeks because of an ankle injury, yet, in spite of having to withdraw from a reserve team game last night, is hopeful of appearing in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup semi-final against Leeds at Central Park, Wigan, on Saturday.

Leeds will be at close to full strength. Gary Mercer, the New Zealand forward, and Francis Cummins, the re-named left wing, were passed fit yesterday after missing a game through injury, but Simon Irving is ruled out.

England will play Wales in the first amateur international between the countries at the Morfa Stadium, Swansea, on Sunday. All but one of the side played for the Great Britain Young Lions team that drew 28-28 in an inaugural match against South Africa earlier this month.

ENGLAND AMATEUR XIII: P. Llewellyn (Wrexham); R. Gell-Weid (Wrexham); N. Quarry (Wrexham); R. D'Arcy (West Hall); S. Wynn (Swansea); M. Morgan (Swansea); C. Wiles (Wigan); S. Parnaby; P. Bawley (Barnstaple); S. Tighe (Durley Hill); P. McSweeney (Barnstaple); J. Allen (Llanelli); S. Holman (Barnstaple); J. Hill (Barnstaple); S. Williams; L. Newton (Barnstaple); D. Owen (Wrexham); C. Walker (Barnstaple); J. Gable (Wrexham).

SPORTS LETTERS

Referees given wide range of interpretation

From Mr J. A. Morgan

Sir, An incident at Twickenham last Saturday reminded me of the curious way in which the players seem to have accepted the adoption by referees of their own versions of the laws.

This occurred when a prop was lectured and penalised for swinging a punch at his opponent, who was illegally impeding his break from the lineout.

At the next tackle (and sadly at most subsequent tackles) when the half-carrier was grounded, players went way beyond the ball, taking out opponents who were not playing the ball (they were merely

striving to get beyond the ball themselves), but no resentment at this more painful illegality was apparent. Perhaps the players think it is legal; certainly it is part of the modern game, though in no way a particular criticism of the match referee, Jim Fleming, whom I would happily allow to referee a Wales v Scotland game.

Yours faithfully, J. A. MORGAN, Rhyl, Rhyl, Caernarfon, Gwynedd.

From Mr Charles Vaughan Sir, The leading article ("Run the Ball", March 19) set out well some of the down side of

the new laws in rugby union. However, it did not take those consequences far enough. The laws are now so complicated that referees can pick from a plethora of infringements at every phase of play.

At best, this results in referees breaking up the flow of the game in their attempt to be even-handed. At worst, it gives prima donna referees an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and command of the new laws, with consequential disruption to the game.

Yours faithfully, CHARLES R. VAUGHAN, Balworth Villa, Balworth Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire.

Action needed against thugs

From Mr Guy Perry

Sir, Shall we take it that no action — criminal or otherwise — will be taken against Neil Jenkins for blatantly sinning a head-butt at Rob Andrew in the England v Wales match at Twickenham last Saturday? Of course, international law reverts to "it's all heat of the moment stuff. We're pals really and buy each other drinks afterwards".

How reassuring! I hope the All Blacks offered to fund the medical expenses of Phil de Glanville after one of their players nearly put out his eye earlier this season.

Real play must be stamped on, not players' faces. Unless the authorities ban the culprits, they remain guilty by complicity of tolerating thugery, and are therefore as irresponsible as some of the players parading around the international scene.

By the way, two Welsh forwards raked the back of an English forward in the tenth minute. I won't bother to mention the names: no action will be taken.

Yours faithfully, GUY PERRY, 15 Abbey Court, Bracondale, Norwich, Norfolk.

Sports Letters may be sent by fax to 071-782 5046. They must include a daytime telephone number.

Flat racing needs festival

From Mr Michael Waudby

Sir, If Julian Muscat believes (Racing commentary, March 21) that the new owners of Epsom can by such measures as moving the paddock and improving facilities for picnickers put the Derby meeting on a par with the Cheltenham festival, he is likely to be disappointed.

The Cheltenham festival is the culmination of the National Hunt season and all horses in training running over differing obstacles and varying distances aim for it. The Epsom Derby meeting is basically about discovering which three-year-old colts and fillies, approximately ten weeks into their second season of racing, are most effective over a distance of one and a half miles.

Success at Cheltenham can virtually ensure that the horse is regarded as the champion for that year at its particular specialisation (eg, two-mile chaser, juvenile hurdler). Success in the Derby or Oaks

bestows no such accolade on the winner: they have much to prove, and are often not up to the task, before they can be regarded as even the best of their generation.

Flat racing in England places far too much emphasis on what a horse can or cannot do by the June of its third year, and with a racing programme structured around this basic premise there is no hope of creating a meeting with can be regarded as comparable to Cheltenham.

If the British Horseracing Board and Jockey Club wish to create a flat racing championship meeting, they will have to give serious consideration to moving the Derby to later in the season and taking steps to ensure that other races over a variety of distances are staged at the same time.

Yours faithfully, MICHAEL WAUDBY, 33 Market Place, South Cave, Brough, East Yorkshire.

Two-leg answer

From Mr Keith Lawrence

Sir, I have heard all the arguments for and against the use of a northern venue instead of Wembley for the FA Cup semi-final, and have sympathies with both viewpoints.

The obvious answer is to make the format for the semi-finals the same as is successfully used in so many other

football competitions (both domestic and in Europe): two legs, first name out of the hat to host the first leg.

No doubt some manager, somewhere, will then start moaning about "fixture backlog".

Yours faithfully, KEITH M. LAWRENCE, 13 Peveril Crescent, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

THE TIMES

Follow the progress of your 1st XI by using the official TCCB statistics on this scorecard. Only the international matches between England and West Indies (the five one-day internationals and five Test matches) count. Catches and stumpings made by your designated wicketkeeper as wickets but catches by other players do not. At the end of the final match, the difference between predicted totals for each category and their actual totals, measured in points: one point for each run, and 20 points for each wicket, regardless of whether underestimated or overestimated. The winner will be the person with the fewest points.

No	Name	Runs	Wickets
WICKETKEEPERS			
01	R C Russell	051	04
02	A J Stewart	3113	05
BATSMEN			
03	M A Atherton	470	00
04	G A Hick	324	03
05	N Hussain	026	00
06	M P Maynard	094	00
07	M R Ramprakash	048	00
08	R A Smith	213	00
09	G P Thorpe	054	00
BOWLERS			
10	A R Caddick	052	06
11	A R C Fraser	005	07
12	A P Iglesden	024	05
13	C Lewis	098	15
14	D E Malcolm	024	06
15	I D K Salesbury	024	07
16	P C R Tufnell	002	03
17	S L Watkin	004	07

Revival o meeting Hillyard's

Revival o meeting Hillyard's

CONCASTER

RACELI

Flawed genius of a peacock among pigeons

Simon Barnes analyses
the complex nature of
Eric Cantona, a talented
yet tortured soul

You can't be judged like any other player. Behind you there is a trail of the smell of sulphur. You can expect anything from an individual like you.

This was a judgment passed on Eric Cantona after a sending-off one that took place a few years ago when he was playing in the French league. It was a judgment that has been set aside for a season or two.

In England, Cantona has seemed as close to peace as he is likely to get, playing for Manchester United. But now, he has got himself sent off in successive games and the air around him is once again thick with the smell of sulphur.

Cantona was born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards. This is ever the way of a certain type of gifted person: a person in whom the line between gift and neurosis is blurred to the point of being indiscernible, or even irrelevant.

In the high arts, there was Joyce, van Gogh and a thousand more. In the intense world of sport, there are still further legions of this troubled and troubling type: McEnroe, Best, Botham, Maradona... and on and on. Athletes capable of high sporting inspiration are often disturbing, turbulent people.

Cantona is emphatically of this number. It is his fragmentary bouts of genius that lift the present Manchester United side from very good to quite extraordinary. He has skill and presence, he scores goals but, above all, it is his mastery of a kind of spatial paradox that elevates his side.

Cantona's play is epigrammatic: a series of clipped, sparkling paradoxical phrases. His best vehicle for expression is the back-heel, a device he uses so often you would think his feet were on backwards.

The back-heel is football's classic paradox and Cantona has employed it time and again to open, with a theatrical flourish, great vistas of unimagined space. That touch says everything: Cantona's inventiveness and his natural perversity are expressed in a single devastating touch.

It is virtuosity that draws the now traditional oo-ah chorus but Cantona mixes style with content. He does not decorate matches, he wins them. Space is the most prized, most elusive commodity in football, and Cantona brings this in his gift. You ask Giggs and Kanchelskis, who have spent most of this season gourmandising on



Grace in space as Cantona, the enfant terrible of Manchester United and France, shows off the smoother side of his character by gliding past an opponent

the offerings of Cantona. It is not hard to lyricise the talents of Cantona: "I imagine the ball to be alive, sensitive, responding to the touch of my foot, to my caresses, like a woman with the man she loves," Cantona, outdoing the goolies of football writers, said.

But like McEnroe and Co. it seems that the price Cantona pays for his moments of inspiration is intermittent possession by the devil. Every detail of his career tells of a man at odds with the world: in particular, at odds with authority.

Why, one wonders, does so flagrant an individual play a team game? But you cannot rebel in a vacuum. You cannot be an individualist without colleagues to

be different from. Without plain statement, there is no paradox.

Cantona's talent for paradox electrifies the teams he plays for. In successive seasons, he fit up Leeds United and Manchester United and won championship medals. Before that, he had enjoyed a series of honeymoons and poisoned farewells with team after team. Before coming to England, he played for Auxerre, Martignes, Auxerre again, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Montpellier and Marseilles again. Not bad for a 27-year-old.

Cantona insists on being a misunderstood genius. Perhaps he feels that only misunderstanding can define true genius. But first, he must stand out from his surround-

ings: a peacock among pigeons. He will always catch the eye: the eyes of defenders, spectators, the press, the referee. Cantona is a marked man. He would not have it any other way. "You need a particular talent only to want to please," Cantona said, in his autobiography, *Cantona: My Story*. "I don't have this talent."

And so he continues: throwing the ball at the referee (red card), calling in turn each member of a French disciplinary commission an idiot (suspension doubled to two months) then retiring forever. And then retiring in England, getting walloped by a Turkish policeman, sent off after the final whistle of that European Cup match against

Galatasaray for expressing his opinion of the referee — and now the two most recent sendings-off.

Perhaps the honeymoon had gone on too long. Manchester United have been falling apart before our eyes in their quest for the unprecedented treble. Each player has, quite clearly, felt the strain: none has made this quite as apparent as Cantona.

What next? A falling-out with Alex Ferguson, the United manager, and with the United fans, to be dropped, to slam the door on yet another club? It all seems terribly inevitable. And yet Cantona is equally capable of striding out at Wembley in the League Cup final on Sunday and lifting United back

to the heights from which they fell. With one back-heel, he could restore peace to the troubled souls of Manchester United. It all depends on Ferguson's taste for risk and diplomacy, and on Cantona's taste for adversity.

In his book, Cantona quotes a French writer, Jacques Thibert, on the phenomenon of sporting genius, words clearly close to his heart, words he would, perhaps, like to have engraved on the tombstone of his footballing career. "Here are the high-wire artists of the soul, people who can do the impossible, who are on another plane. They are flawless only in the expression of their sporting excellence."

NFL opts for rule change with two-point conversion

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

OWNERS of clubs in the National Football League (NFL) made the first change for 75 years to the scoring system of major league American football on Tuesday when they voted unanimously to approve the two-point conversion after touchdowns.

The usually-conservative owners made the change during their annual meeting in Orlando, Florida. The owners, who had previously spurned the two-point conversion, made the move in an effort to re-emphasise the touchdown and increase attacking play. They also voted for changes to the kicking game in an effort to make matches more exciting.

The NFL had come under criticism for the increasing emphasis on field goal-kicking in recent years, which many spectators felt made for a less exciting game. After scoring a touchdown, worth six points, a team will have the option of either kicking the ball through the goalposts for one point or of going for the two-point conversion. The team must run or pass the ball into the end zone to score the two points.

"I really think it's time has come," George Young, the general manager of the New York Giants and the co-chairman of the competition committee, said. "There was an image out there that we weren't doing enough to score touchdowns. Right or wrong, we had to do something about it."

The two-point conversion has been used for many years in college football and was used in the old American Football League, but had always been rejected by the NFL. Under the new rule, after scoring a touchdown, a team would have the option of

Other changes

□ Kickoffs will now come from the 30-yard line rather than the 35 and will be from a one-inch tee to prevent kicks that hang in the air almost as long as punts. Kickers now use tees from 1-3in.

□ Failed field goals will now be placed at the spot from where the kick was attempted, rather than at the line of scrimmage. The kicking team will be penalized 7-8 yards for missing.

passing or running the ball into the end zone from the two-yard line. A successful attempt would be worth two points.

The change had always been rejected by NFL coaches, who saw it as one more decision on which they could be second-guessed, and the New York Giants coach, Dan Reeves, was upset because the coaches were not allowed in the debate over the rule change. By the time they arrived, the decision had already been taken.

"What was the greatest comeback in history? Buffalo over Houston in the play-offs two years ago," Reeves said, referring to the Bills' overtime win after trailing 35-3 in the third quarter. "They didn't need a two-point conversion to do that."

"I was against it two days ago. I was for it yesterday and I don't know what I think today," the Green Bay Packers coach, Mike Holmgren, said. "Overall, I don't know how much effect it will really have."

"Maybe once in every four years or so I'd use it in the middle of a game," Merv Levy, of Buffalo, said.

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Own goal helps Millwall to gain ground

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

AN OWN goal by Chris Greenman, the Peterborough United defender, strengthened Millwall's chances of promotion to the FA Cup Premier League at the New Den on Tuesday night. In the 72nd minute Greenman sliced the ball into the net for the game's only goal while trying to stop Dave Mitchell, the Millwall forward, looking to score.

Millwall, struggling to avoid relegation, can consider themselves unlucky.

York City won their fourth consecutive game in the Endleigh League Insurance second division with a 2-0 home defeat of Bournemouth. Goals from the veteran defender, Paul Stancliffe, and Ian Blackstone kept the home side in the promotion hunt.

The challenge of Bristol Rovers continues to falter. They went down 2-2 at Wrexham after twice holding the lead. Mark Taylor scored twice for Wrexham, including the winner ten minutes from time.

At the bottom there were wins for Barnet and Hartlepool United with the latter's 5-0 home victory over Cardiff City watched by just 1,077 — the lowest Endleigh League crowd of the season.

Barnet defeated Exeter City, also threatened by relegation, 2-1 at Underhill thanks to a controversial winner from Terry Gibson, the former Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United player.

The Autoglass Trophy final will be between Huddersfield Town and Swansea City, despite both teams losing their second leg semi-final matches.

Fifteen Swansea supporters were arrested at Wycombe Wanderers in a 1-0 defeat, but the club went through to Wembley for the first time, 3-2 on aggregate. The supporters included the pitch to delay the kick-off and teams of police reinforcements were drafted in to control the 2,500 contingent. More arrests were made after the final whistle.

Huddersfield lost 2-0 at Carlisle United, who had looked like wiping out a three-

goal deficit when they scored twice in 60 seconds just before half-time.

However, Huddersfield hung on for a 4-3 winning aggregate to return to Wembley after a gap of 56 years.

Although there were no goals in Northern Ireland's Under-21 international with Romania, the Belfast crowd witnessed the birth of an exciting new talent. Neil Lennon, a 23-year-old midfielder player with Crewe Alexandra, showed why he is the target of several Premiership clubs as he stamped his authority on Tuesday night's match.

As well as controlling midfield Lennon looked dangerous near goal. Indeed he managed to get the ball into the net in the second half, only for the effort to be ruled out for offside.

Keith Gillespie, of Manchester United, who showed pace and vision, Darren Patterson, the Crystal Palace centre back, Gary O'Hara, the Leeds United full back, and James Quinn, the Blackpool striker, were others who must have impressed the newly-appointed manager, Bryan Hamilton.

Romania were reduced to ten men in the 42nd minute when their midfielder player, Gabriel Popescu, was ordered off for comments made to the Welsh referee, Alan Howells.

Gillespie almost broke the deadlock early on with a lob inches too high and from one of his corners Romania had a lucky escape when their goalkeeper, Christian Munteanu, punched the ball on to his crossbar. At the other end Decan Devine brought off a brilliant 5th-minute save to deny Julian Filipescu.

St Johnstone's new signing, Colin Miller, a Canadian international, got off on the right foot with the Perthshire supporters in a goalless draw at Partick Thistle in the Scottish premier division. With his first touch he delivered a perfect free kick and when his team-mates failed to take advantage almost scored himself with a swerving drive which was smothered on the line.

Gascoigne breaks down under pressure

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE pressure building on Paul Gascoigne during his troubled stay with Lazio bubbled over yesterday when the England midfielder burst into tears during a training session. Gascoigne dropped out of the session, complaining that he felt unwell and was suffering a recurrence of a rib injury, before breaking down in the players' car park.

Dino Zoff, the Lazio coach, and Gascoigne's father, John, quickly calmed him down. Zoff then took him away for a brief private meeting at which, he said, Gascoigne apologised.

With his future with the club in doubt because of his poor fitness record and disciplinary problems this season, the incident has heightened speculation that Gascoigne will shortly be released by

Lazio. His failure at the weekend to attend the 3-0 defeat of Napoli at the Olympic stadium in Rome brought a stinging response from Sergio Cragnotti, the Lazio president, who warned that the player's future is on the line.

"We will decide at the end of the season [whether or not to keep him] but it is clear that someone who plays one week and not the next three is no use for us," Cragnotti said. "He's a lad with a lively personality who can be hard to control, but he must realise that his first duty is to Lazio."

Gascoigne has appeared in only 15 of Lazio's 28 league games this season, scoring just twice. He suffered bruising to his ribs in the derby win over AS Roma more than two weeks ago, played for more than an hour in England's friendly with Denmark three days later but has



Gascoigne: unwell

since missed Lazio's league games against Udinese and Napoli.

Zoff was prepared to offer a sympathetic ear yesterday. "Gascoigne is to be understood. He has apologised to

me," he said. "He is a very sensitive boy. He is a player anyone would want to have in their team." Zoff, however, will not be around to offer Gascoigne such understanding next season: he is to be replaced by the Czech-born coach, Zdenek Zeman, the demanding disciplinarian who coaches Foggia.

State prosecutors probing the financial affairs of Torino have called for the seven-time Italian champions to be declared bankrupt. The request presented to Torino's bankruptcy court says the club is insolvent. Torino has debts estimated at in excess of £20 million.

Bernard Tapie was freed to carry on as club president of Marseilles yesterday when an appeal court in Douai, France, overturned a decision that he step down by April 20. The order had been issued on

February 10 as part of Tapie's bail conditions after he was charged by an investigating magistrate in connection with a match-fixing scandal.

Ball of about £20,000 and a ban on Tapie contacting anybody else connected with the investigation into allegations that Marseilles attempted to fix a league match against Valenciennes last season were maintained. Tapie has been charged with being an accessory to the attempt to bribe three Valenciennes players to take it easy during the match and of interfering with witnesses in the case.

Diego Maradona said yesterday he was six weeks away from being fully match-fit. Maradona, who did not join the Argentina squad for yesterday's match with Brazil in Recife, added that he would do his training with the Argentine squad.

Europe refuses to play ball

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

EUROPEAN Union countries are unlikely to give the United States blacklists of football hooligans before the World Cup finals. This would be contrary to human rights and rules on the protection of personal data, the Irish Justice Minister, Mire Geoghegan-Quinn, told reporters in Brussels yesterday.

She was speaking after ministers from the seven EU states which have teams in the finals discussed US requests for help with security and information on how to fight hooliganism.

She emphasised that the US had not asked Ireland to provide such a list, although several countries had received a request. "Irish fans have a great record," she said. Ireland, Italy, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Greece and Holland have qualified for the finals.

At the last World Cup finals in Italy in 1990 German and English supporters fought police and damaged property before and after several matches.

England, who have a reputation for the most violent football following, failed to qualify for the US finals.

Meanwhile, in New York, workers began yesterday the task of replacing the artificial surface at the Giants Stadium

with grass for the World Cup finals to be played there this summer.

An official statement said the work, delayed by bad weather in the area in recent weeks, would start with plywood boards being laid over the Astroturf before a drainage system and a layer of sandy loam was installed.

"Weather permitting, the grass is tentatively scheduled to be installed at the stadium on April 11," it said.

The NFL stadium in New Jersey is due to host seven World Cup matches, including a semi-final.

Gerry Francis, the Queens Park Rangers manager, added to the confusion surrounding his future at Loftus Road by having further talks with Wolverhampton Wanderers yesterday. The former England captain has been the first division club's prime target to replace Graham Turner, who resigned last week, since his initial meeting with Jonathan Hayward, the Wolves chairman, last Friday.

But after visiting Molineux yesterday, to take his first look at Wolves' new £15 million headquarters, Francis was told he must make up his mind within 48 hours. Wolves are anxious not to be drawn

into a tug of war with Rangers, particularly in the light of the demonstration by QPR supporters at the end of Saturday's FA Premiership game with Wimbledon.

"They've told Francis they want a decision, one way or the other, by the weekend," Manchester United are to play a memorial match for the referee, Frank Martin, who committed suicide last year before facing Football Association charges of "insulting and improper behaviour".

Alex Ferguson's side will play the Konic League of Wales champions, Cwmbran Town, at Cwmbran Stadium on August 16 in memory of Martin, 42, who was found dead in his home-filled car last September shortly after being told he was to be charged by the FA following a practical joke at a referees' fitness session.

Martin, who had run the line in European and Premiership matches, had admitted moving a marker cone during a training test and apologised by letter when the Referees' National Review Board demanded the identity of the man responsible. He was suspended from linesman's duties and ordered to appear before an enquiry panel but died before the hearing could take place.

Limpar ready to leave Arsenal for £1.6m

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

ANDERS Limpar is likely to spearhead the annual scramble to meet the transfer embargo deadline today. The popular but intrepid member of Arsenal's first team is preparing to meet Manchester City and Everton to discuss a £1.6 million move north before the 5pm Premiership deadline.

Limpar, 28, is expected to accept the chance of regular first-team football to boost his chance of a place in Sweden's World Cup squad this summer. Although a firm favourite with Highbury regulars, the winger has often clashed with the Arsenal manager, George Graham. Limpar has started just a dozen games this season, and only 97 league games in total since his £1 million move from Cremonese in 1990.

Swindon Town, the bottom club, are interested in Steve Morrow, of Arsenal, the Northern Ireland international utility player who scored the winning goal in the Coca-Cola Cup final against Sheffield Wednesday last season. Morrow is valued at £750,000.

West Ham United may move for Don Hutchison, of Liverpool, after failing to tempt the Oxford United winger. Joey Beauchamp,

with a £1 million move. Beauchamp could not agree personal terms with Billy Bonds, the West Ham manager.

Denis Smith, the Oxford manager, trying to negotiate a reduction in Sunderland's £175,000 asking price for the striker, David Rusik, said: "They made him a good offer but it shows how well we pay and look after our players."

Smith completed one capture, taking Arsenal's rarely-used winger, Jimmy Carter, on loan until the end of the season.

Newcastle United have signed the Rangers central defender, Brian Reid, 23, on loan until the end of the season with a view to a permanent £500,000 deal.

Aston Villa have agreed to extend the loan of the forward, Guy Whittingham, to Wolverhampton Wanderers for a second month, with the proviso that he can be recalled at 24 hours' notice.

Neil McDonald, 27, the Oldham Athletic midfielder player who cost £500,000 from Everton in October 1991, has been given a free transfer.

OTHER TRANSFERS: Paul Doherty, Arsenal to Brighton, loan; Chris O'Brien, Gillingham to Torquay United, go fee; Jason Peadar, Hibernian to Rochdale, exchange plus £10,000.

